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JHALAWAR TRAGEDY

7 children die in school collapse in Rajasthan

NEWS » PAGE 8

BURDENED LOT

In Bihar, a matter of life and debt

People battle high interest rates and lenders' threats

GROUND ZERO » PAGE 7

WHO WILL BE QUEEN?

Humpy, Divya battle for World Cup glory

SPORT » PAGE 15

LS to take up motion to remove HC judge

After proceedings in the Lower House, it will go to the RS; Rijiju says 152 ruling and Opposition MPs have signed the motion against Justice Varma

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

> All parties have agreed that removal of Justice Varma has to be a joint call. Now there should be no issue with regards to which House it has to be moved... we have agreed that it will be moved in the Lok Sabha and concurred in the Rajya Sabha as per rule
>
> **KIREN RIJIJU**
> **Parliamentary Affairs Minister**

The Lok Sabha will take up a bipartisan motion to remove Justice Yashwant Varma of the Allahabad High Court, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Friday.

He said that it was a unanimous decision of all political parties, and 152 MPs from the ruling alliance and the Opposition had signed the motion.

Cash recovery row

Justice Varma, then with the Delhi High Court, was caught in a controversy after wads of half-burnt currency notes were found at his official residence in the capital when a fire broke out there on March 14. He was transferred to the Allahabad High Court after the incident.

Mr. Rijiju said all parties had agreed that the removal of Justice Varma should be a joint call, adding that the proceedings will be first taken up in the Lok Sabha and then in the Rajya Sabha in line with the Judges (Inquiry) Act.

"We shouldn't remain in any doubt, proceedings will begin in the Lok Sabha," he said. His remarks have to be seen in the backdrop of an Opposition-sponsored motion that was moved in the Rajya Sabha on July 21, the same day the process was set rolling in the Lok Sabha.

Official sources said the notice in the Rajya Sabha had not been admitted.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

France will recognise Palestine as state: Macron

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Thursday his country would formally recognise a Palestinian state during a UN meeting in September.

The U.S. strongly opposed France's move, with its Secretary of State Marco Rubio calling it a "reckless decision [that] only serves Hamas propaganda".

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the decision "rewards terror".

Over 140 countries, including India, have recognised Palestine as a state.

Several countries have announced plans to recognise its statehood since Israel launched a bombardment of Gaza nearly two years ago in response to the Hamas attacks.

FULL REPORT » PAGE 12

Muizzu thanks India for its 'pivotal role' in economic recovery

Ties get a boost: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu in Male on Friday. PTI/ @PRESIDENCYMV

Meera Srinivasan
MALE

Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu on Friday thanked India for its "pivotal role" in helping the island nation deal with its economic crunch and liquidity challenges, and said he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have "charted a clear path" for future cooperation.

Mr. Muizzu's statement came on the first day of Mr. Modi's two-day state visit to the Indian Ocean archipelago, following his visit to the United Kingdom.

There has been a steady reset in bilateral ties since Mr. Muizzu visited India in October 2024, following a serious strain in the preceding year after Mr. Muizzu's election.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

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Particulars	Quarter Ended 30th June 2025	Quarter Ended 30th June 2024	Change / Growth %	
TOTAL DEPOSITS	53,803	49,188	9.38%	↑
TOTAL ADVANCES	45,120	40,853	10.44%	↑
TOTAL BUSINESS	98,923	90,041	9.86%	↑
NET PROFIT	305	287	6.27%	↑
NET INTEREST INCOME	580	567	2.29%	↑
CREDIT COST %	0.06	0.89	83 bps	↓
GROSS NPA %	1.22%	1.44%	22 bps	↓
NET NPA %	0.33%	0.65%	32 bps	↓
PCR RATIO	94.32	90.27	405 bps	↑
EPS (₹)	19.25*	18.14*	6.12%	↑
CRAR %	31.55%	29.21%	234 bps	↑

* Not annualised

NOTE:
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results are available on the website of the Stock Exchange(s) (www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com) and on the Bank's Website (www.tmb.in)
2. Information relating to Total comprehensive income and other comprehensive income is not furnished as Ind AS is not yet made applicable to banks.

₹ in Crores

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended 30.06.2025 (Unaudited)	Quarter Ended 30.06.2024 (Unaudited)	Year Ended 31.03.2025 (Audited)
1.	Total Income from Operations	1617.47	1514.87	6141.75
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	403.92	383.40	1574.89
3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	403.92	383.40	1574.89
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	304.89	287.29	1182.61
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive Income (after tax)	NA	NA	NA
6.	Equity Share Capital	158.35	158.35	158.35
7.	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous Year	-	-	8850.34
8.	Earnings Per Share (of Rs.10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) 1. Basic:	*19.25	*18.14	74.68
	2. Diluted:	*19.25	*18.14	74.68

* Not annualised

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Uma Kanjilal was serving as active V-C of IGNOU. FILE PHOTO

Uma Kanjilal becomes first woman V-C of IGNOU

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Uma Kanjilal has been appointed the first woman Vice-Chancellor of Indira Gandhi National Open University, four decades after it was established, according to Education Ministry officials. "With over 36 years of distinguished service in the Open and Distance Learning system, Kanjilal brings a wealth of academic leadership, digital innovation, and institutional knowledge," an official said.

Relief for 6,000 residents of Indira Colony as HC halts demolition drive

No coercive action until next hearing on July 31, further examination required, says court; eviction notice put up in CM's constituency, BJP reneging on poll promise to provide houses to slum dwellers, says AAP; land belongs to railway: Centre

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition Atishi addressing a press conference in New Delhi on Friday; Indira Colony residents protesting outside CM Rekha Gupta's residence. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP/ FILE PHOTO

Over 6,000 residents of Indira Colony in north-west Delhi have received a temporary reprieve as the Delhi High Court ordered a stay on a demolition drive scheduled for Saturday and directed that no coercive action be taken until the next hearing on July 31.

The court passed the interim order on a petition filed by the Indira Colony Resident Welfare Association, which challenged an eviction notice issued by the Northern Railway on July 4, citing "unauthorised occupation" of railway land. The court observed that the issue "requires further examination".

Broken promise

Amid legal proceedings, the issue drew sharp political reactions. At a press conference, Leader of the Opposition Atishi said: "Before elections, the Prime Minister promised every slum dweller a *pucca* house under the slogan *'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahan Makaan'*. But ever since the BJP came to power, bulldozers have arrived at poor people's homes."

Former Shalimar Bagh AAP MLA Bandana Kumari said panic spread in the area on July 4 when the notice was pasted. "This is CM Rekha Gupta's constituency. Despite her assurances, bulldozers razed one *jhuggi* earlier. Now, Indira Camp faces the same threat," she said.

While there was no immediate response from the BJP, the CM had previously assured residents that no demolition would occur without legal process or rehabilitation, and that any demolitions under way were court-directed.

Policy breach

The petitioners argued that the eviction violated Article 21 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to life and dignity, including shelter, and that authorities had not followed due process under the Delhi Slum and JJ Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2015, and the 2016 Draft Protocols.

"None of the required steps were taken," it said, pointing out that the colony appears as Serial No. 74 on the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board's (DUSIB) list of 675 eligible jhuggi jhopri (JJ) *basti*s. The protocol mandates that the land-owning agency must send a request to DUSIB, which must examine the eligibility of the *basti* for rehabilitation. Only if found ineligible, can demolition proceedings begin, the plea said.

Appearing for the Northern Railway, the Central government's counsel submitted that the land belongs to the railway and that the occupants were in "illegal possession".

The eviction notice, the counsel argued, was issued in accordance with the law.

₹100-cr. global drug racket busted; five arrested

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

A drug cartel based in Nigeria with links to countries, including Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, India and the United Kingdom, was busted in the Capital, the Delhi police said on Friday.

Five African nationals have been arrested in the drive and drugs worth over ₹100 crore have been seized, said an officer.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Mangesh Kashyap said the cartel operated through a central command in Nigeria, where handlers received orders from Indian clients via fake call centre numbers and then relayed them to delivery agents in the national capital.

"The cartel's Indian arm operated using a logistics model inspired by food delivery apps," said Mr. Kashyap, adding that deliveries were made based on customers' live locations.

Govt. launches sanitation drive in city ahead of I-Day

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta announced on Friday that to mark Independence Day, the government will launch a month-long sanitation campaign starting from August 1.

The campaign, titled 'Delhi's Freedom from Garbage,' will involve all Delhi government departments, residents' welfare associations, market associations, and students.

The CM said the campaign will focus on schools, government offices and hospitals, and efforts will be made to clear accumulated waste.

"Attention will be given to slum areas, unauthorised colonies and informal settlements, ensuring that a significantly higher volume of waste is collected and disposed of compared to normal days. Cleanliness is not merely a government initiative but a civic duty," said Ms. Gupta.

DU ready for 1st batch of final-year FYUP students: V-C

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Fourth-year classes for the university's first FYUP batch will begin on August 1. FILE PHOTO

With over 70% of third-year students opting to complete the elective Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP), Delhi University Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh said all arrangements are in place to welcome the first batch of FYUP students into the fourth year on August 1.

"So far, 20,221 students out of over 72,000 have opted out of the FYUP, which means more than 50,000 students will continue with the course," the V-C told *The Hindu*.

Over concerns about required infrastructure and workload of existing teachers, Mr. Singh said, "We are well-prepared to commence the fourth year, and there should be no issues. Principals are making arrangements, and senior teachers will be taking the fourth-year classes."

The FYUP, under National Education Policy 2020, was adopted by DU in 2022, allows a student to receive a certificate after completing one year, a diploma after two years, a graduate degree after the third year, and a graduate degree with a research specialisation after the fourth year.

However, some of the teachers say that the colleges neither have an adequate teaching and non-teaching staff nor the necessary infrastructure for fourth-year students.

Rajesh Jha, a professor at Rajdhani College, said, "Preparations are under way but there are no additional classrooms and teachers. We have to take the fourth-year classes either early in the morning or late in the evening."

Raising similar concerns, Astha Ahuja, a professor at Aryabhatta College, said, "We are still struggling to finalise the timetable as there is a lack of teaching staff."

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CHANGE OF NAME

It is informed to the General Public that I Avitaran Singh R/O D-51, Manoj Vihar, Indirapuram, PO Shipra Sun City, Ghaziabad, UP 201014 that my Father's name is Gurdip Singh. Gurdip Singh and Gurdeep Singh is One and the same person.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
DECLARATION OF PROCLAMATION OF OFFENDERS

Whereas the Hon'ble Delhi State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (DSCDRC) has issued an order dated 27-05-2025 in IA-411/24 in Execution Petition No. EA-112/22 titled as **"Kumar Deo Ranjan Singh & Anr. vs Parsvnath Buildwell Pvt. Ltd. & Anr."** declaring the following Directors of the Judgment Debtor Company namely Parsvnath Buildwell Pvt. Ltd. as Proclaimed Offenders:

1. **Mr. Pradeep Kumar Jain S/o Mr. Sheetal Prasad Jain r/o 7, Central Lane, Bangali Market, NDMC, New Delhi-110001, DIN: 00333486.**
2. **Mr. Rajeev Jain S/o Mr. Sheetal Jain r/o H.no. D-129, Ist floor, Near Durga Mandir, Preet Vihar, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092, DIN: 00433463.**
3. **Mr. Subhash Chander Setia S/o Mr. Suraj Prakash r/o KG-1/350, Vikas Puri, Tilak Nagar, West Delhi-110018, DIN: 01883343.**
4. **Mr. Ashok Kumar S/o Mr. Jai Prakash r/o Disco Compound, GT Road Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201001, DIN: 00138677.**
5. **Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Jain S/o Mr. Sheetal Prasad Jain r/o J-12/2, DLF City, Phase-II, Gurgaon-122002, DIN: 00333881.**

The aforementioned individuals are hereby directed to appear before the Hon'ble Commission (DSCDRC) within a period of **30 days** from the date of publication of this Notice.

Issued under Order of the Delhi State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (DSCDRC).
Date: 17-07-2025.

Deputy Registrar
DSCDRC
Mr. Vishal Ranjan,
Counsel for Kumar Deo Ranjan Singh/DH

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The Executive Engineer HPPWD Division Nurpur Distt Kangra HP on behalf of Governor of HP invites the percentage/item based bid in electronic tendering system from the eligible Class of Contractors for the works as detailed :

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The starting date of downloading of bid is 30.07.2025AM and deadline for submission of bid is 06.08.2025.
The bidders are advised to note other details , conditions and eligibility for tenders from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in.
HP / 2049/25-26 him suchana avam jan sampark
Executive Engineer, Nurpur Division, HPPWD, Nurpur

HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
"CORRIGENDUM"

The e-tender invited vide this office N.I.T. No.PW/NBD/Tender/NIT/2025-3974-88 dated 21.07.2025 is hereby postponed due to technical/Administrative reasons. Now the bidding documents for the same works can be viewed from the website https://hptenders.gov.in and can be downloaded from the website https://hptenders.gov.in from **05:00 p.m. on 31.07.2025 to 05:00 p.m. on 08.08.2025**. The technical and financial bids can be deposited in electronic format on the websitehttps://hptenders.gov.in from **05:00 p.m. on 31.07.2025 to 05:00 p.m. on 08.08.2025**. the technical bids received will be opened on at **11.08.2025, 11:30 a.m**. Other detail can be seen in the bidding document. Bid documents contain qualifying criteria for bidders, specifications, bill of quantities, conditions and other detail. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bid will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

The complete bidding process will be online.

The undersigned has right to extend or cancel the bids without declaring any reasons there-of.

All other terms and condition shall remain unchanged.

Executive Engineer
HP PWD Division
Tanda at Nagrota Bagwan
HP / 2027/25-26 ***HUM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK***

HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS
Sr. No1.
Name of Work:- A/R & M/O WSS Manali Town in Tehsil Manali Distt. Kullu H.P. (SH: - Operation and maintenance of intake structure WTPs, pump houses at Old Manali (old & new), sector storage tanks, other civil works, raw water gravity main, sector gravity mains, entire distribution system, entire firefighting network i.e hydrants, generator, distribution of water bills for 60 months.)
Estimated Cost:- Rs. 3,22,26,600/-, **Earnest Money**:- Rs. 3,97,260/-, **Time Limit** :-Sixty Months, **Cost of tender Form**:-Rs. 5000/-.

Key Dates: -

I	Date of online publication	24.07.2025 to , up to 05:00 PM
II	Bid Submission Start date and Time	From 24.07.2025, 05:30 PM
III	Bid submission end date and time.	Up to 31.07.2025, 11:00 AM
IV	Physical submission of important tender related documents	Up to 11.00 AM 31.07.2025
V	Date of Opening of Bid i.e. Eligibility criteria.	31.07.2025 at 11:30 AM
VI	Date of opening of financial bid.	Date, time and place shall be notified separately online.

Tender document and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed on line by the firms/ individual from the portal https://hptenders.gov.in free of cost.
HP / 2031/25-26
Executive Engineer, JSV Division Katrain.

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OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

In Loving Memory of
Smt. Sheelavathy Karunakaran
12th March 1927 – 22nd July 2025

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the peaceful passing of our beloved mother.
Smt. Sheelavathy Karunakaran,
W/o Late Sri. G. Karunakaran
Southern Railways, Madurai
Mother of:
Dr. K. Uma Devi, Dr. K. Rema Devi, Mr. K. Ravi Kumar
Mother-in-law of:
Mr. N. Vijay, Mr. T. M. Singaravel, Mrs. A. Sreedevi
Grandmother of:
Srihari, Sriram, Mukund, Giridhar, Vidya, Srikumar
Grandmother-in-law of:
Dr. Indra, Radha, Shivani, Dr. Sachin, Dr. Deepali
Great-grandchildren:
Ari, Sankara, Sanjeev, Esha, Pahi, Aryan.
OM SHANTHI

DEATH

OBITUARY

Mrs. C. KALPAGAM
(24 May 1948 - 22 July 2025)
Deeply Mourned by:
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Children:
Mr. Ganesh Chandru (Advocate)
Mr. Chandramouli C and
Ms. Ranjani Chandru
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A ND-NDE

Shivakumar's words reflect Cong. culture, says Goa CM

Press Trust of India
PANAJI

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Friday responded to the "lost mental balance" jibe of Karnataka Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar, saying the remarks reflected "Congress culture".

Mr. Shivakumar made the remark on Thursday while stating that Karnataka would proceed with the Mahadayi river project, an emotive issue in neighbouring Goa. He said Mr. Sawant was not aware of the federal structure.

The comments came after the Goa CM told the Assembly that the State would move the Supreme Court against Karnataka for continuing work on the project despite the matter being heard by the court.

"When someone is frustrated, they utter such words," he said, adding that Congress leaders in Karnataka are "competing among themselves on how low they can stoop".

Centre flags 'harsh' penalties for rape; Governor returns Aparajita Bill to Bengal govt.

MHA has termed 'disproportionate' an amendment to enhance punishment to life in jail or death, says Raj Bhavan official; Bill was passed after rape and murder of doctor at R.G. Kar Medical College

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Raising concerns over the death penalty provisions in the Aparajita Women and Child (West Bengal Criminal Laws Amendment) Bill, 2024, Governor C.V. Ananda Bose has returned the draft legislation to the State government for further consideration.

"One of the proposed amendments seeks to enhance the punishment for rape under Section 64 of the BNS, 2023, raising it from the existing minimum of 10 years to life imprisonment for the remainder of one's life or death.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has termed this change excessively harsh and disproportionate," an official at Raj Bhavan said.

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose. FILE PHOTO

Passed unanimously

The Assembly had unanimously passed the Aparajita Bill on September 3, 2024, introducing stringent punishment in cases involving sexual assault. The Bill was sent to President Droupadi Murmu by the Governor on September 6, 2024.

The draft legislation, which was passed 25 days after the rape and murder of a doctor at the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, proposes death penalty for five categories of offences – rape, rape by a police officer or a public servant, rape causing death or resulting in a persistent vegetative state, gang rape, and rape by repeat offenders.

Raj Bhavan officials pointed out that the Bill proposes to make the death penalty mandatory in cases where the victim dies or is left in a vegetative state under Section 66 of the BNS.

"The Ministry of Home Affairs has raised concerns over the removal of judicial discretion in such cases," the official said.

According to Raj Bhavan, the Bill also proposes to delete Section 65 of the BNS, 2023, thereby eliminating the distinction in punishment for the rape of girls under 16 and 12 years of age.

Proportional sentencing

"The Ministry has observed that the removal of such classification violates the principle of proportionality in sentencing," the official added.

The development comes amid appeals by the Trinamool Congress government urging the Centre to approve the Bill. A delegation of party MPs had met the President on February 13 to press for its early approval.

Certain legal experts had described the Bill as a "knee-jerk response".

Maharashtra CM meets Union Ministers, seeks assistance for implementing projects in State

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis held a series of meetings with top Central leaders in Delhi over the last two days to discuss and secure financial assistance for the implementation of development projects in the State, officials said.

According to the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), during his tour to Delhi, Mr. Fadnavis met Union Ministers Amit Shah, J.P. Nadda, Rajnath Singh, Nirmala Sitharaman, and Shivraj Singh Chouhan, and NITI Aayog officials.

The meeting with Mr. Shah at Parliament House lasted for about 25 minutes, during which projects and issues concerning Maharashtra were discussed, the CMO said.

Mr. Fadnavis, also the State Home Minister, sought approval and assistance for three projects from global financial institutions during the meeting with Ms. Sitharaman.

These include financial assistance of $1 billion (₹8,651 crore) from the Asian Development Bank for the concretisation of roads in rural Maharashtra. Another project – resolving rising sea levels in Maharashtra through natural means – requires assistance of $500 million (₹4,326 crore).

The CM also sought assistance of $500 million from the World Bank for reuse of sewage for industrial purposes. The CMO added that Ms. Sitharaman gave instructions to the Finance Ministry to approve all three projects.

During the meeting with Mr. Nadda, Mr. Fadnavis proposed the setting up of a 12.7-lakh-tonne fertilizer project in Nagpur district. The State government has asked for a subsidy of ₹10,000 crore for the project, the CMO said.

The CM also submitted a proposal worth $2.6 billion (₹22,490 crore) to the Union Ministry of Rural Development to build 14,000 km of roads in the State.

Pre-marriage HIV/AIDS test could be mandatory in Meghalaya: Minister

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Meghalaya may follow Goa in making the HIV/AIDS test mandatory for all before marriage, the State's Health and Family Welfare Minister Mazel Ampareen Lyngdoh said on Friday.

The Minister said an "alarming" overview of the HIV/AIDS scenario in the State by the Meghalaya AIDS Control Society (MACS) had led the government to consider a new law to make such a test compulsory.

On Thursday, Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong chaired a meeting with the agenda of formulating a comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy. The Health Minister said her department was directed to prepare a Cabinet note for the policy.

She said the meeting was specific to the East Khasi Hills district, which recorded 3,432 HIV-positive cases in 2024, almost twice as many as the year before. Of these, only 1,581 were availing of antiretroviral therapy.

'BJP's own people not getting justice': Akhilesh fires salvo at U.P. govt.

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday alleged that the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) "own people" and workers are not getting justice in Uttar Pradesh.

His comments came after a video of BJP leader and former MP Anil Shukla Warsi protesting at a police station in Kanpur over an alleged fake case under the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) Act against a BJP supporter went viral.

"No one is heard in the BJP government. Their own people are not getting justice. Even the Deputy CM was being scolded," said Mr. Yadav, while addressing mediapersons in Kannauj.

In the purported video, Mr. Warsi, while talking to Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak over phone, questioned him for "failing to provide security to the Brahmin community".

Mr. Warsi's wife, Pratibha Shukla, is a junior Minister in Uttar Pradesh.

Timings
DELHI

SATURDAY, JUL. 26	
RISE 05:40	SET 19:16
RISE 06:56	SET 20:33
SUNDAY, JUL. 27	
RISE 05:40	SET 19:15
RISE 07:58	SET 21:05
MONDAY, JUL. 28	
RISE 05:41	SET 19:15
RISE 08:55	SET 21:33

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	36	25
Safdarjang	36	25
Palam	36	24

Delhi Palam Today
35°C The weather will be warm. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusry winds may occur. Night will be comfortable.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
36°C Morning will be comfortable. Day will be very warm and uneasy. Night will be comfortable. Mostly dry weather to prevail.

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THE HINDU
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Ref.No 12753 VMSBUTU/2025 Date: 23-07-2025
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VMSB Uttarakhand Technical University, Dehradun invites online application form for the admission in the Ph.D. Programme for academic session July 2025. Online applications are invited from motivated and research oriented candidate for admission in Ph.D. Programmes of University.
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• WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
• NOIDA , Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
• LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./ AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD. (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/ EMAIL
1	UHBVN	ENGAGEMENT OF IT FIRM FOR ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT AND ENHANCEMENT OF SOFTWARE APPLICATION OF OIMS & TIMS IN UHBVN	23.07.2025 14.08.2025	EMD RS. 1,00,000/-	www.uhbvn.org.in NIT No. 1/SE/ IT/2025-26, dated 23.07.2025	01722524155 xenituh@uhbvn.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in
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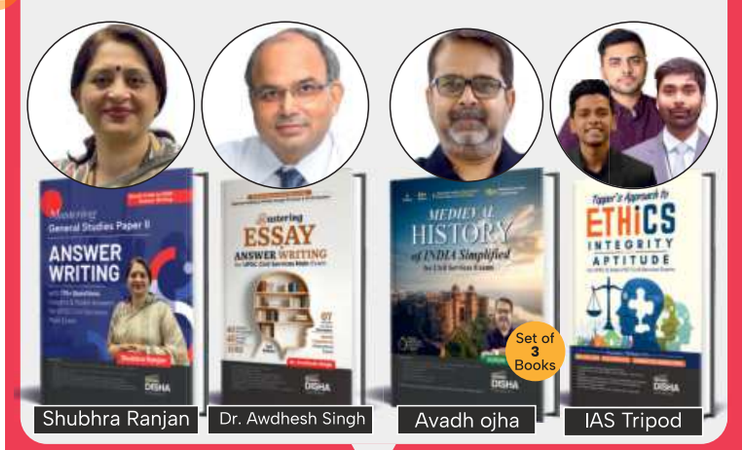

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OFFICE OF THE DHENKANAL MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, DHENKANAL
E-Procurement Notice
Tender Call Notice No. 2797/DKLMPLTY/Date 24.07.2025

1.	Name of the Work	: Individual Civil Construction work Published in the website.
2.	No of works put to tender	: 01 No. individual works
3.	Estimated cost	: Rs. 254.981 Lakhs
4.	Period of completion	: 12 Months.
5.	Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal	: from 11.00 hours of Dt. 28.07.2025 to 17.30 hours of Dt. 11.08.2025
6.	Last date/Time for receipt of bids	: 17.30 hours of Dt. 11.08.2025
7.	Date and time of opening of Technical bid	: 11.00 hours of Dt. 12.08.2025
8.	Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Executive Officer, Dhenkanal Municipality, Dhenkanal

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tenderodisha.gov.in
Executive Officer, Dhenkanal Municipality
C-747: OIPR-13146/11/0041/2526

SRINAGAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Bemina, Bye Pass Near SKI MS Medical College,Srinagar, Kashmir-190018
TEL:0194-2493191, FAX:0194-2493180, EMAIL:srinagardevelopmentauthority@gmail.com
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT)
NIT No: 02 of 2025-2026
Subject: Notice inviting tenders for the work of "Construction of 3BHK (phase-2nd) Block-P&Q for vertical Housing Colony Shehjar Heights at Bemina Srinagar opposite Haj House".
The Employer, Vice Chairman, Srinagar Development Authority (SDA), on behalf of Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, invites bids from bidders who shall be an Agency/ Entity/ Company/ Firm incorporated in India under the (Indian) Companies Act 2013/ Firm registered under the Limited Liability Partnership Act 2008/Approved and eligible "AAY" Class Contractors registered with the State Governments and bidders of equivalent Grade/Class registered with Central Government / MES / Railways, for the work as detailed in table below

Name of work	Estimated Cost	Class of contract	Earnest Money	Cost of tender document	Time of completion
Construction of 3BHK (phase-2nd) Block-P&Q for vertical Housing Colony Shehjar Heights at Bemina Srinagar opposite Haj House	Rs.4650.93 lacs	Class-A	Rs.93.02 Lacs.	Rs.20000/-	Twenty-four (24) Months

The date for the NIT are as under:-

S.No.	Particulars	Schedule
1	Date of issue of NIT	22-07-2025
2	Availability of Bid Document one-procurement portal.	23-07-2025 (04.00PM)
3	Date of receipt of pre-bid queries.	30-07-2025
4	Date of pre-bid meeting.	31-07-2025 (online /in person)
5	Date of Replies to pre-bid queries	02-08-2025 (upto 4.00PM)
6	Bid submission Start date	03-08-2025 (from 10.00AM)
7	Bid Submission End date	13-08-2025 (upto 4.00PM)
8	Last Date for receipt of physical instruments of Cost of Bid Document and Security Deposit.	14-08-2025
9	Opening of Technical Bids	18-08-2025
10	Date of opening of Financial Bid	

Executive Engineer
DIPK-NB-1342/25 Sirnagar Dev. Authority

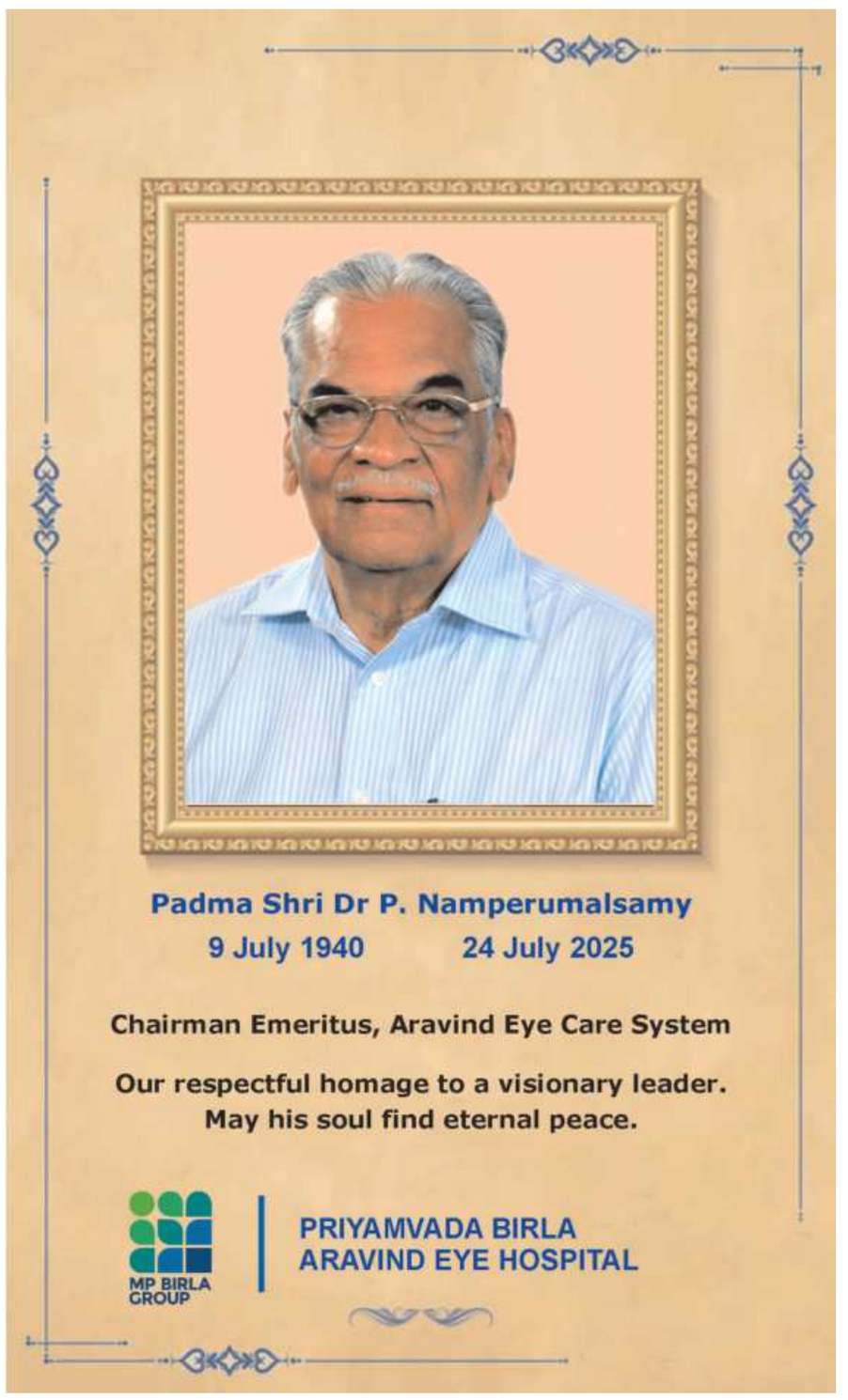
SRINAGAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Bemina, Bye Pass Near SKI MS Medical College,Srinagar, Kashmir-190018
TEL:0194-2493191, FAX:0194-2493180, EMAIL:srinagardevelopmentauthority@gmail.com
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT)
NIT No: 03 of 2025-2026
Subject: Notice inviting tenders for the work of "Construction of 2BHK (phase-2nd) Block-K&L for vertical Housing Colony Shehjar Heights at Bemina Srinagar opposite Haj House".
The Employer, Vice Chairman, Srinagar Development Authority (SDA), on behalf of Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, invites bids from bidders who shall be an Agency/ Entity/ Company/ Firm incorporated in India under the (Indian) Companies Act 2013/ Firm registered under the Limited Liability Partnership Act 2008/Approved and eligible "AAY" Class Contractors registered with the State Governments and bidders of equivalent Grade/Class registered with Central Government / MES / Railways, for the work as detailed in table below

Name of work	Estimated Cost	Class of contract	Earnest Money	Cost of tender document	Time of completion
Construction of 2BHK (phase-2nd) Block-K&L for vertical Housing Colony Shehjar Heights at Bemina Srinagar opposite Haj House	Rs.3828.19 lacs	Class-A	Rs.76.57 Lacs.	Rs.20000/-	Twenty-four (24) Months

The date for the NIT are as under:-

S.No.	Particulars	Schedule
1	Date of issue of NIT	23-07-2025
2	Availability of Bid Document one-procurement portal.	24-07-2025 (04.00PM)
3	Date of receipt of pre-bid queries.	30-07-2025
4	Date of pre-bid meeting.	31-07-2025 (online /in person)
5	Date of Replies to pre-bid queries	02-08-2025 (upto 4.00PM)
6	Bid submission Start date	04-08-2025 (from 10.00AM)
7	Bid Submission End date	14-08-2025 (upto 4.00PM)
8	Last Date for receipt of physical instruments of Cost of Bid Document and Security Deposit.	14-08-2025
9	Opening of Technical Bids	20-08-2025
10	Date of opening of Financial Bid	

Executive Engineer
DIPK-NB-1340/25 Sirnagar Dev. Authority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INBRIEF

Jharkhand mine 'collapse': rescue operation begins

A joint team from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the Bharat Coking Coal Ltd (BCCL) started a search operation on Friday to rescue miners trapped in an abandoned coal mine in Jharkhand's Dhanbad district, a senior official said. The roof of the mine had reportedly caved in on July 22. The operation, led by a 35-member squad of the NDRF and a 15-member BCCL team, began at 11.30 a.m. after a bid to search for the miners on Thursday proved futile. Jamshedpur (West) MLA and former Minister Saryu Roy had on Thursday alleged a "cover-up to conceal at least 15 deaths in the incident". PTI

Atishi replaces Pankaj Gupta as AAP's Goa unit incharge

Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and former Delhi Chief Minister Atishi was on Friday appointed as the incharge of the party's Goa unit, replacing Pankaj Gupta, who is currently unwell. Ms. Atishi, a key strategist of the party and a prominent face of its national leadership, is expected to oversee organisational affairs and strengthen AAP's presence in the coastal State ahead of the 2027 Assembly election. The party, which has been attempting to build its base beyond Delhi and Punjab, sees Goa as a crucial State in its national expansion plans. Ms. Atishi is also the Leader of the Opposition in Delhi. PTI

Bihar Monsoon Session ends amid exchange of barbs, protest over SIR

CM berates Oppn. members for wearing black, 'wasting time' during session, the last one before the State heads to the polls; Rabri Devi accuses BJP-JD(U) govt. of trying to kill her son, Tejashwi

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

The five-day-long Monsoon Session of the Bihar Legislature, the last before the State elects a new Assembly later this year, culminated on Friday amid heightened exchange of barbs between the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the Opposition Mahagathbandhan.

While Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar chided the Opposition members for wearing black clothes in the House, Rashtriya Janata Dal leader and former Chief Minister Rabri Devi accused the ruling BJP-JD(U) combine of "hatching a conspiracy" to kill her son and Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Tejashwi Yadav.

Opposition party members attended both Houses of the Legislature on all five days dressed in black clothes to protest against the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the State.

Opposition leaders protesting outside the Bihar Assembly in Patna on Friday against the special intensive revision of electoral rolls. PTI

CM fumes

Mr. Kumar was speaking in the Legislative Council when Opposition MLCs shouted slogans against the SIR as well as the State government.

The Chief Minister fumed and said, "You people have been coming here dressed in black. What does this mean? You have never done anything sensible. It is the last day of the session, and you are wasting time."

Pointing towards Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Rabri Devi, he said, "She might have given an instruction and all of you, including those in her party as well as allies, chose to follow her and come here in black dresses. When did you dress up like this before?"

Speaking to mediapersons outside the Legislative Council, Ms. Rabri Devi said, "What wrong did we do inside the House? The proceedings have been recorded. I dare the government to prove any misconduct on our part."

She alleged that the ruling alliance had tried to murder her son ahead of the Assembly election.

'Many being murdered'

"There have been attempts to murder Tejashwi four times by the ruling BJP-JD(U) combine. So many killings are taking place in the State daily," alleged the former Chief Minister.

The RJD leader recalled an incident when a "truck had tried to run over Tejashwi's vehicle".

A day earlier, Mr. Yadav had alleged that he was being "intimidated and abused" by NDA leaders while speaking on SIR.

The Assembly election is due in October-November this year.

Haasan, three DMK MPs take oath as RS members from T.N.

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) founder Kamal Haasan; former Additional Advocate-General and incumbent Rajya Sabha member P. Wilson; poet Rajathi alias Salma; and S.R. Sivalingam – all backed by the DMK and its allies – took oath as Rajya Sabha members from Tamil Nadu on Friday. They took the oath in Tamil.

Speaking to reporters outside Parliament, Mr. Haasan said, "I am very proud and honoured."

The 69-year-old actor-turned-politician was elected to the Rajya Sabha with the support of the DMK, which had allocated one seat to the MNM.

Elected unopposed

On June 12, six members were elected unopposed from Tamil Nadu, including I.S. Inbadurai and M. Dhanapal of the AIADMK.

Except for Mr. Wilson, all are first-time members. The outgoing members were MDMK general secretary Vaiko, PMK leader Anbumani Ramadoss, M. Mohamed Abdulla,and M. Shanmugam of the DMK, and N. Chandrasegharan of the AIADMK.

Actor and MNM founder Kamal Haasan taking oath as a Rajya Sabha member on Friday.

In a post on X, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin congratulated the newly elected members and hailed the contributions of the outgoing MPs. Quoting party founder C.N. Annadurai's famous words in the Rajya Sabha, "I belong to the Dravidian stock", Mr. Stalin said the DMK MPs had carried forward that legacy by upholding Tamil Nadu's rights and voicing its demands in the Rajya Sabha.

In a statement, he said, "Mr. Vaiko had served four terms in the Rajya Sabha and one in the Lok Sabha. With his rich experience, he had consistently given voice to the Tamils' cause and the rights of Tamil Nadu in Parliament."

Police order probe, suspend 2 personnel after uproar over 'killing' of youth in J&K

Peerzada Ashiq
JAMMU

The Jammu and Kashmir police on Friday evening ordered an investigation into the death of a 21-year-old man in an alleged shoot-out in Jammu a day ago. The police have registered an FIR at the Satwari police station and "placed under suspension with immediate effect" two personnel – head constable Baljinder Singh and constable Pawan Singh.

The Deputy Superintendent of Police, Jammu Headquarters, "is directed to hold a departmental inquiry against them and the officer shall complete the proceedings on merit and submit the findings for further necessary action", the police said.

Magisterial inquiry

The District Magistrate of Jammu also ordered a magisterial inquiry into the incident. The Inquiry Officer has been directed to complete the investigation within two weeks.

The bereaved family members of Mohammad Parvez mourning outside the mortuary of a hospital in Jammu on Thursday. PTI

Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had joined the growing clamour from relatives and political parties to constitute an inquiry.

The victim, Mohammad Parvez, who was engaged in sand mining, had left home on Thursday with his brother-in-law to buy medicines, according to family members, who are residents of Niki Tawi.

Later, the police asked the family members to identify a body at the Government Medical College, Jammu. Parvez had married two months ago, and the family claimed he had nothing to do with drug peddling. However, several Jammu-based news portals quoted police officials, claiming there was a shoot-out with drug peddlers at Surey Chak area in Satwari on Thursday and that the youth was killed.

The police did not furnish further details about the incident.

However, the family and the Gujjar community refuted the police claim that Parvez was a drug peddler. "It is a fake encounter," Talib Hussian, a Gujjar social activist, said.

A spokesman of the Gujjar Bakerwal Students' Alliance said the "selective killing of Gujjar youth in Jammu through fake encounters is alarming".

'Provide compensation'

The family also had urged the L-G administration to initiate an impartial investigation and announce compensation and a job for a family member.

"The killing of Parvez of Niki Tawi in Jammu is highly unfortunate and deeply regrettable. Use of force by the police has to be calibrated and cannot be indiscriminate. J&K has paid a heavy price in the past because of incidents such as these," the CM said.

Man held in drug case dies in NCB custody in M.P.; district court orders judicial probe

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

A 35-year-old man, detained for alleged illegal possession of drugs, died in the Narcotics Control Bureau's (NCB) custody in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur district, officials said on Friday.

According to the NCB, Mahipal Singh Rajput was detained from Unhel in Ujjain district on the intervening night of July 23 and 24 with 411 grams of contraband, and was taken to Mandsaur on Thursday morning.

Deputy Superintendent of Police (NCB) R.K. Chaturvedi told *The Hindu* that Rajput fell ill after reaching Mandsaur and was immediately rushed to a hospital where he passed away. A judicial probe by the district court has been initiated in the matter, he added.

Rajput's family has questioned the move of rushing him to a private hospital, not a government facility

"He fell ill and started vomiting even before we could begin the proceedings or question him. So we moved him to a hospital. Prima facie, the doctors are saying that he had an infection in his stomach and lungs, which caused vomiting, and he accidentally swallowed it, causing him to choke," Mr. Chaturvedi said, adding that a panel of doctors will conduct the post-mortem.

The deceased's family questioned the motive behind taking him to a private hospital instead of a government facility.

The senior officer, however, said, "We took him to the best possible option available nearby because the private hospital also had a ventilator."

He said that Rajput had been convicted after he was arrested in 2009 for possession of 300 grams of smack.

Police 'thrash' tribal

Meanwhile, a tribal man was allegedly brutally beaten inside the Bhainsdehi police station in Betul district, after he was detained following an argument with some locals.

In a complaint handed over to the Bhainsdehi Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Parasram Chilhate alleged that around 10.30 a.m. on July 24, his brother Sandeep Chilhate was "thrashed by some local liquor traders and taken to the police station, where the police personnel also brutally beat him up".

NHRC notice to U.P. Police over 'suicide after torture'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Friday said it has issued a notice to the Director General of Uttar Pradesh Police over reports that a man died by suicide after alleged physical torture by the police in Farrukhabad district earlier this month.

The NHRC, in a statement, observed that the content of the news report, if true, raises a serious issue of violation of the human rights of the victim.

The man was reportedly called to a police station following a complaint against him by his wife. According to the media report, he was tortured and a bribe was demanded to settle the matter.

(Those in distress may contact Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health suicide prevention helpline: 011-40769002.)

185 Pak. refugees get Indian citizenship under CAA

Abhinay Deshpande
AHMEDABAD

After years of waiting, 185 displaced persons from Pakistan were officially recognised as Indian citizens under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019. The moment marked the end of a long period of uncertainty for these refugees, many of whom have been living in Gujarat's Rajkot, Morbi, and Kutch districts for several years without formal citizenship status.

"You are now citizens of the great nation – India," Gujarat Minister of State for Home Affairs Harsh Sanghavi told the recipients during an interaction in Rajkot on Friday.

Many in the crowd responded with chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai", while some became emotional as they received their documents. Those granted citizenship included men, women, and children who migrated from Pakistan due to religious persecution and lack of security. Many among them are from Hindu, Sikh, Jain, and Buddhist communities – groups identified under the CAA as eligible for naturalisation.

Gujarat Minister Harsh Sanghavi handing over the Indian citizenship document to an applicant in Rajkot on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Among the recipients was a young woman doctor who had completed her medical education in Pakistan. Just as she was about to begin her career, her family was forced to flee the country, said Mr. Sanghavi.

"After years of waiting in India without legal status, she now holds official Indian citizenship," he said.

Others included daily wage earners, homemakers, and elderly individuals who had spent years awaiting legal recognition.

Mr. Sanghavi said the Union government is committed to standing with those who have suffered due to religious discrimination in neighbouring countries. "This is not just a certificate – it is the return of dignity, safety, and rights."

The Minister added that India, guided by the principle of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the world is one family)', respects all religions and protects the rights of the vulnerable.

He also credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for the implementation of the CAA, calling it a step that has saved lives and restored identity.

He directed local officials to ensure that details of the new citizens are seamlessly integrated into the existing administrative system to help them become eligible for government schemes related to education, health care, housing, and livelihood.

Equal opportunities

"From today, your children will grow up with access to the same opportunities as any other Indian citizen," he told them.

Several beneficiaries shared their thoughts after receiving the citizenship certificates. Rajkot resident Asha Ben Becharbhai said, "From today, I am part of India. I feel safe. I feel recognised."

Another beneficiary, Bhavna Ben Maheshwari, said, "Now I can say without hesitation that I'm an Indian. I thank the government for the support."

Protest, sloganeering not allowed in M.P. Assembly during session, states circular, citing 'security protocols'

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh Assembly Secretariat has prohibited protests and sloganeering on the Assembly premises during the upcoming Monsoon Session, scheduled to start on July 28. The move has drawn criticism from the Opposition Congress.

July 10 order

The ban was announced through a circular dated July 10 issued by A.P. Singh, the Assembly's Principal Secretary, in view of "security protocols".

"Hon'ble Members are also requested that under the Standing Order 94(2) of Hon'ble Speaker, sloganeering and demonstrations in the Assembly premises by Hon'ble Members are prohibited," read the circular.

Congress termed the move a 'murder of democracy' and reiterated its demand of live-streaming the House proceedings

Criticising the move, Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Assembly Umang Singhar said that the decision was taken "under pressure from the government".

"The government, which gives false and fake statistics in the Assembly, is issuing such rules and orders by pressurising the Speaker to protect itself from being exposed. This is the murder of democracy," he said, while reiterating the Congress's demand of live-streaming the House proceedings.

Oppose the move: LoP

"Article 194 of the Constitution gives special powers to the lawmakers to raise the public's issues in the House. We strongly oppose this move and, like earlier, will raise public issues loudly in the upcoming session," he said.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Singh, however, termed the circular a "routine" exercise issued for security purposes ahead of each Assembly session.

Let's Crack UPSC Together

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ISSN 0971 - 751X

SC allows Kerala to withdraw two pleas against its Governor

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The withdrawal is based on an April 8 judgment of SC in a similar case against Tamil Nadu Governor

The Supreme Court on Friday allowed the State of Kerala to withdraw two petitions filed against its Governor for his delay in clearing crucial Bills despite stiff resistance from the Centre.

Appearing before a Bench headed by Justice P.S. Narasimha, Attorney General R. Venkataramani said the State was withdrawing on the strength of an April 8 judgment in an identical case concerning the Tamil Nadu Governor. "This is not just a simple withdrawal," Mr. Venkataramani told the top court.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta asked the court to tag the Kerala petitions against its Governor with a Presidential Reference pending before a Constitution Bench.

The April 8 judgement has prescribed a maximum three-month deadline for both the President and State Governors to act on State Bills sent to them for approval or reserved for consideration under Articles 200 and 201, respectively, of the Constitution.

In May, the President had issued a reference under the advisory jurisdiction of the Supreme Court (Article 143 of the Constitution), questioning the court's inherent powers under Article 142 to "impose" timelines and prescribe the manner of conduct of Governors and the President while dealing with State Bills.

"How can withdrawal of a petition be tagged with a Presidential Reference before a Constitution Bench?" Senior advocate K.K. Venugopal reacted. The senior lawyer said the State was entitled to withdraw its case.

'No strings attached'

"But there is a string attached to the April 8 judgement," Mr. Venkataramani insisted. "No strings attached... The string is cut," Mr. Venugopal said.

In an earlier hearing on July 14, Mr. Venugopal had submitted that the April judgment had made the State's petitions infructuous. The law officers had countered that the court ought to wait for the Constitution Bench's respomses to questions raised in the Presidential Reference.

However, Justice Narasimha had himself remarked that it would be "very, very difficult" for the apex court to stop Kerala from withdrawing its petitions.

Convict escapes Kannur jail, held after four-hour search

Govindachamy, convicted for rape and murder, was found clinging to a rope inside a well; a local court remanded him in 14 days' custody; incident raises concerns over prison security in Kerala

The Hindu Bureau
KANNUR

Busted again: Police personnel bring Govindachamy, who escaped the Kannur Central Jail early on Friday, to the Kannur Town police station. S.K. MOHAN

In a dramatic pre-dawn search operation that lasted for over four hours, the Kerala Police on Friday arrested Govindachamy, alias Govindaswamy, convicted in a 2011 rape-and-murder case of a 23-year-old woman, after he escaped from a high-security block of the Kannur Central Jail.

The first signs of escape were noticed when the police found a makeshift rope, made out of pieces of clothing, dangling over the southern wall of the jail. According to the police, Govindachamy, who was serving a life sentence, escaped from his cell around 1.15 a.m. and managed to slip out of the compound by 4.30 a.m. The Kannur Town police were alerted around 6.30 a.m. and two search squads were deployed. A dog squad led the search party to the vicinity of the District Congress Committee office in Talap, about 3 kilometres from the jail.

A tip-off from a local resident, Vinoj, who works in a private firm, and an auto driver, enabled the police to zero in on the fugitive. "He matched the description and looked suspicious. When we called his name, he jumped into a nearby compound. We alerted the police immediately," said Vinoj.

The arrest was made after M. Unnikrishnan, a staff at the National Sample Survey Office, found someone hiding inside the well on the office premises. "Upon being told that Govindachami was seen nearby, I checked the well," he said. The man was clinging to the rope inside the well. "He threatened me of dire consequences if I alerted anyone, but I immediately informed the police," Mr. Unnikrishnan added.

Govindachamy was soon taken into custody and brought to the Kannur Town police station. After a medical check-up at the Government District Hospital, he was produced before the Judicial First Class Magistrate Court, where he was remanded in 14 days' custody in the Central Jail.

An internal probe has raised serious concerns over prison security. Jail sources confirmed that Govindachamy used an axe blade or similar metal, allegedly found on the prison premises, to cut the bars of his cell door.

To conceal the damage, he tied the bars using ropes and strips of cloth, initially used to keep cats off the cell.

Cellmate mum

A remand prisoner who shared the cell reportedly could not provide much information about the incident. Authorities suspect that the escape was premeditated. During inquiry, he reportedly said he had been planning the escape for a long time as he was tired of life in jail.

Kannur District Police Chief P. Nidhinraj described the incident as a 'well-planned escape.' "He collected remand prisoners' clothes on the premises to prepare the makeshift rope and chose a part of the compound wall near the water tank to scale," Mr. Nidhinraj said.

On whether Govindachamy received inside help, he said no such information had emerged yet but did not rule out the possibility. Following a probe by the Deputy Inspector General of Prison, three prison officials were suspended for negligence. They are Deputy Prison Officer Rejish A.K., Assistant Prison Officers Sanjay S. and Akhil Charith.

Life in Gurugram hit by exodus of workers fearing police drive

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

The crackdown on illegal immigrants has been slowed down after RWAs flagged disruption in sanitation services, said the police

Parts of Gurugram are facing an acute shortage of domestic workers and garbage collectors after many migrant labourers, mostly from West Bengal and Assam, fled the city, fearing police action amid a crackdown on undocumented Bangladeshi nationals.

The sudden exodus has disrupted daily life for many residents in upscale localities.

The police say they are going slow on the drive after residents' welfare associations (RWAs) flagged the issue of disruption in sanitation services.

"We are acting only on specific inputs. So far, 10 people have been identified as illegal residents based on documents from the respective District Magistrates. They were found to own land in Bangladesh and were born there," Gurugram Police spokesperson Sandeep Kumar said.

'80% workers gone'

Abhey Poonia, the senior vice-president of the Gurgaon Citizens' Council, an umbrella body of over 80 RWAs, said, "Nearly 80% of domestic staff and waste collectors have left in the past few days. Garbage collection has been hit. The municipal vehicle comes once every three to four days now."

Notably, the RWAs have been supporting the drive.

Residents of Sushant Lok-II and Sector 43 shared similar accounts.

A couple living in Regency Park-I said their help and car cleaner, verified by the police, fled to Assam after night drives in their building. "The ongoing drive scared them. Their landlord also told tenants from Bengal and Assam to vacate," they said.

Migrant workers mostly stay in the villages of Chakkarpur, Nathupur, Sikanderpur Ghosi, and jhuggi clusters around DLF Phase-I, III, and Sector 56.

Firdos, a car washer who lives with his wife and two daughters in the Carterpuri village, said he, too, plans to return to West Bengal. "The police have detained many people I know. One of them was also beaten up," he claimed.

The police spokesperson dismissed allegations of harassment or torture of the detainees.

'Could take a week'

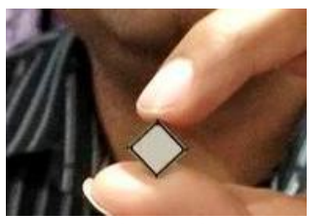
A contractor managing waste collection in Sector 15 Part-II and its neighbouring areas reported labourers fleeing en masse.

"Most of my workers have left. It could take over a week for things to settle," added the contractor.

However, the Municipal Corporation spokesperson, Satyabir Rohilla, denied disruption in the collection of garbage.

AI chip developers hit back at allegations, cite support from Centre

Sarath Babu George
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM



Developers of Kerala's first silicon-proven AI chip say that the project is not commercial.

Countering allegations surrounding Digital University Kerala's invention Kairali AI Chip, its makers have maintained that their invention is an academic research initiative, and not a commercial product.

They also emphasised the ground-breaking nature of its achievement of designing a functional AI test chip at a State-funded institution with limited infrastructure and funding.

The Save University Campaign Committee (SUCC) had raised concerns regarding the Kairali Chip by alleging a lack of transparency in its development and misuse of public funds. The organisation also claimed that the chip's design was not disclosed, lacked patents and had not been commercially validated.

It had also questioned why the chip development was not officially communicated to the Central government, particularly at a time when the Centre has invested heavily in India's semiconductor ecosystem.

The developers of Kerala's first silicon-proven AI chip, have stated that the project's first prototype was developed by teams of Master's and PhD students, and was validated through multiple reviews under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's (MeitY) Chip to Startup (C2S) programme.

Highlighting the prohibitive costs of chip development, ranging from $1 million to over $200 million, the makers pointed out that the test chip was realised with limited resources using programmes such as Efabless platform and open-source tools, using a 130nm fabrication process.

Under C2S initiative, the research team led by Professor Alex James was able to carry out modular tape-outs, publish research and provide real-world chip design training to students. The Kerala government has also recognised the work of Prof. James by awarding him the Kairali Researcher Award which further supported research into bio-inspired AI.

Heavy rain, swelling rivers stall transport between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

Rajulapudi Srinivas
VIJAYAWADA

Rescue efforts: Personnel of the NDRF 10th Battalion searching for N. Tirupataiah, who was washed away in the Munneru River, in NTR district on Thursday. G.N. RAO

Causing inconvenience to the public, road transport between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was cut off at some places as streams began overflowing.

Police and revenue officials arranged pickets on main roads as rivulets were in spate due to incessant rains in the upstream Bhadradri Kothagudem and Khammam districts of Telangana. The pickets were arranged in order to prevent people from crossing the overflowing streams, the police said.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on Friday, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) K.M. Maheswara Raju said traffic was suspended for two days on the National Highway near Kattaleru Vaagu in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, as the stream was overflowing.

We allowed traffic on Friday as the water was receding. Officers have been instructed to monitor the flood situation and the rainfall in the upstream areas round the clock, the DCP said.

N. Tirupataiah (31) of Tatimaddi village of NTR district of Andhra Pradesh was washed away after he accidentally fell into the Munneru River, which had been in spate. "The NDRF 10th Battalion, police and locals are searching for Tirupataiah," said Mr. Raju. He appealed to villagers to not enter the overflowing streams and rivulets.

Many streams in Andhra Paresh – Gurrala Vaagu, Konda Vaagu, Padamata Vaagu – are overflowing. The police and revenue officials have sounded alert in the wake of the heavy rains and floods.

Pickets have been arranged on the main roads at Gampalagudem-Cheemalapadu, Veerulapadu-Nandigama, Tiruvuru-Kambhampadu and other places as the rainwater has come onto the roads, officials said.

Karnataka man missing after falling into river

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

A youth went missing after the pickup vehicle he was driving fell into the swollen Bhadra near Kalasa in Chikkamagaluru district of Karnataka on Thursday. His mother reportedly took her own life on hearing about the incident.

Shamanth, 23, of Ganapathikatte, went missing after his vehicle fell into the river upon hitting an electricity pole. Even as efforts to trace him and the vehicle were on, his mother was found dead. It is suspected that she took her own life on being informed of her son's accident.

(Those facing suicidal thoughts can call up the State's helpline 104 or contact toll-free number 14416 for counselling)

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA **CORRIGENDUM**

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./ AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/ NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	UHBVN	NOTICE INVITING TENDER NO.03/ XEN/PIV/MM/ QH-II/2128 DATED 01.07.2025.	EXTENSION OF DUE DATE FOR LAST DATE OF NIT SUBMISSION UPTO 04.08.2025 12:00 HRS. OPENING DATE 05.08.2025 AT 15:00 HRS.	uhbvn.org.in, etenders.hry.nic.in	01722560438 cemm@uhbvn.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

SAMVAD-13/2026/40/37006/I/199/7

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
E-Procurement Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1. The **Executive Engineer, HPPWD Jubbal, Distt, Shimla**, H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the online bids on percentage rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System of the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors / firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Sr. No1. Name of Work:- Construction of 55.00 mtr. Span Motorable Bridge over river Pubbar at Chamshu in Tehsil Jubbal Dist. Shimla (HP) (SH: - C/O well foundation, Sub-structure and Super- structure etc.) **Estimated Cost:**-42434871, **Earnest Money**:-848700, **Cost of Form** :-7000/-, **Time**:-18 Months.

Key Dates: -

1.	Date of online publication	25-07-2025 1500 HRS
2.	Document Download Start and End Date	25.07.2025 1530 HRS upto 31.07.2025 1730 HRS
3.	Bid Submission Start and End Date	25.07.2025 1530 HRS upto 31.07.2025 1800 HRS
4.	Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	Online Mode
5.	Date of Technical Bid Opening	01.08.2025 1100 HRS
6.	Evaluation of Technical Bid flowed by Opening of Financial Bid.	Date to be announced

Executive Engineer,
(B&R) Division HPPWD, Jubbal.
HP / 2046/25-26 On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh

M.P. STATE ELECTRONICS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
State IT Centre, 47-A, Arera Hills, Bhopal-462011 (M.P.)
www.mpsedc.mp.gov.in, 0755-2518300, marketing@mpsedc.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER'S (NIT)

MPSEDC invites online proposals for following bids on GeM Portal :

S. No.	Bid No./ Tender No.	NIT
1	GEM/ 2025/B/ 6476515	Monthly Basis Cab & Taxi Hiring Services - Premium Sedan; 1500 km x 260 hours; Local, Monthly Basis Cab & Taxi Hiring Services - Sedan; 1200 km x 208 hours; Local, Monthly Basis Cab & Taxi Hiring Services - Premium SUV; 1500 km x 260 hours; Local, Short Term Cab & Taxi Hiring Services - Sedan; Local; 80Kms x 10Hrs, Short Term Cab & Taxi Hiring Services - Premium SUV; Outstation; 500Kms x 14Hrs, Bus Hiring Service - Short Term - Local; 49-52; A.C. Deluxe (ACX); 100

For detail scope of work, terms and conditions please refer to the respective bid document available on GeM Portal.
M.P. Madhyam/121267/2025 **CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER**

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Yelahanka Division, Bengaluru - 560064.

No: BBMP/EE/YNK-D/KPPP/07/2025-26 Date: 25-07-2025

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) - (SHORT TERM)
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

The Executive Engineer, Yelahanka Division, BBMP, Bengaluru invites Tenders from eligible Tenderers for the Construction of Works detailed below.

(Standard Tender Document - KW-02, KW-03 & KW-04)

Sl. No.	Name of the Work / Category
1	Additional Works to Synik Theme Park at Sandeep Unnikrishanan Road 208 SFS in Chowdeshwari Ward No. 02. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 300.00, EMD Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 4.50**
	2ND CALL
1	Resurfacing of Roads 1st Main 24th Cross & MB Bakery Road Maruthinagara in Kempegowda Ward No. 01 of Yelahanka Sub Division. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 50.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 1,00,000/-**
2	Providing and Fixing of Street Name Boards in Kempegowda Ward No. 01 of Yelahanka Sub Division. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 30.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 60,000/-**
3	Resurfacing of Roads at Shirkky Apartment & Yelahanka New Town 5th Phase in Chowdeshwari Ward No. 02 of Yelahanka Sub Division. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 50.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 1,00,000/-**
4	Providing and Fixing of Street Name Boards in Chowdeshwari Ward No. 02. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 25.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 50,000/-**
5	Improvements Roads and Drains at Kere Kodi and Chowdeshwari Layout in Ward No. 02. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 50.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 1,00,000/-**
6	Improvements Roads & Drains at Kamakshamma and Kondappa Layout in Ward No. 02 of Yelahanka Sub Division. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 50.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 1,00,000/-**
7	Providing and Fixing of Street Name Boards in Attur Ward No. 03. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 30.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 60,000/-**
8	Providing & Fixing of Street Name Boards in Yelahanka New Town Ward No. 04. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 30.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 60,000/-**

Calendar of Events: **1)** The Tender Document can be Downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in 2)** Date of Pre Bid Meeting will be held **on 31-07-2025 at 16.00 Hours at the Office of the Executive Engineer (Yelahanka Division). 3)** Tenders must be Submitted online through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **on or before 16.00 Hours on 08-08-2025. 4)** Date of Opening of Technical Bids **on 11-08-2025 after 11.00 Hours.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Yelahanka Division, BBMP.

Let's Crack UPSC Together

Give and take

The India-U.K. trade deal may set the template for the EU and U.S. deals

The India-United Kingdom Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), signed by the two countries on Thursday, is a good example of the give and take between two large economies of comparable size. While the U.K. has agreed to provide India duty-free access to about 99% of its tariff lines, it has been more conservative when it comes to the movement of professionals. It has set an annual quota of just 1,800 visas for niche professional roles such as yoga instructors and classical musicians, and the agreement falls short of making commitments on broader visa categories such as business visitors or IT professionals. This was something India had been keen on. On the other hand, while India has opened about 90% of its tariff lines for duty-free import from the U.K., it has kept key agricultural products such as dairy products, apples, oats, and edible oils out of the deal – key demands of the U.K. Similarly, while India has committed to reducing duties on automobile imports by a substantial 100 percentage points over time, these are subject to a graded quota over the next decade, which gives the domestic industry time to adjust. A sign of a good deal is when both sides walk away happy but not satisfied. In any case, such bilateral deals should not be viewed as a zero-sum game where one side's loss is another's gain. Enhancing bilateral trade is in both countries' interests, especially at a time when the world's biggest trading powers are raising tariff and non-tariff barriers.

The U.K. is a relatively small trading partner for India, but therein lies ample scope for growth. While at a macro scale the gains might initially be limited, the sector-wise increases have the potential to be significant. Sectors such as agriculture, textiles, leather and chemicals are all set to see quick gains. There is potential for longer term benefits too. The U.K. is a major gateway to Europe, which is a much bigger trading partner of India's. Goods destined for Europe could be routed through the U.K., and the duty-free arrangement will likely enhance this flow. Companies in other countries that already export to the U.K. will also start viewing India more favourably as an investment destination so as to take advantage of the duty-free access. It is now up to the government to help Indian exporters scale up and compete internationally. Another important consideration is that such a deal sets the template for future ones. The general trend is that the bigger the economy being negotiated with, the bigger the concessions given. The United States and the European Union will now want more from India than what it has conceded to the U.K.

Healing Manipur

Fragile peace demands political actors pursue genuine reconciliation

The imposition of President's Rule, once a frequent and politically motivated tool of the Centre, has declined considerably since the 1990s. This welcome shift is a consequence of *S.R. Bommai*, the landmark judgment, the rising influence of regional parties in national politics, and public revulsion to its misuse. In recent years, its application has become rare, reserved for genuine constitutional breakdown or severe internal security challenges, such as in Manipur. On Friday, President's Rule was extended there by another six months, from August 13. But few would contest the extension, as the Centre is struggling to find a durable solution to the ethnic conflict. Following the resignation of N. Biren Singh and the fall of the BJP government, there has been a discernible but fragile calm. A crackdown on militant groups that had operated with impunity has reduced open violence, and some families displaced since May 2023 have begun to return home. However, these positive developments are overshadowed by the unbridged and deep-seated ethnic schism between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities. The landscape of Manipur is still carved up by buffer zones, rigidly segregating communities. The political chasm is just as stark: Kuki-Zo groups are resolute in their demand for a separate administration, while hardline Meitei organisations persist with a narrative that brands fellow citizens as "outsiders".

Administrative steps, particularly those that reiterate de-weaponisation and a defanging of militant groups acting for ethnic interests, must continue. They not only break the aura of impunity with which these groups function but will also encourage moderates to raise their voices for reconciliation. During Mr. Singh's tenure, prominent civil society activists seeking to halt the conflict by critiquing the biased nature of governance were hounded. But the administrative measures to improve the rule of law must be supplemented by political gestures. The BJP enjoyed support in the valley and the hills when it was elected, but has been unable to bridge the ethnic hostility. This is largely because the party's national leadership has shown little inclination to treat the issue urgently, leaving it to civil servants and security forces to tackle the problem. While the continuation of President's Rule might seem inevitable in Manipur, its success should not be measured by the absence of violence alone. The Centre's responsibility is to foster political conditions to bridge the ethnic divide, but that responsibility must be shared. Political parties and civil society groups must defy the hardliners and begin the painstaking work of reconciliation. The future of a peaceful Manipur will be written by the initiative of committed political actors willing to transcend ethnic divisions and work toward the genuine healing of their fractured society.

Kargil, Pahalgam and a revamp of the security strategy

Rajeev Agarwal

is a Senior Research Consultant at the Chintan Research Foundation, New Delhi

It is the 26th anniversary of the Kargil war that was fought between India and Pakistan in the icy heights of Kashmir, but the memories are still fresh. It was also the first 'live televised' conflict, which brought the war (May 3-July 26, 1999) into the living rooms of India. Victory was hard fought and won through the sheer grit, the determination and the love for 'Bharat' that the Indian armed forces showed. India not only evicted the Pakistani forces but also forced Pakistan to withdraw and seek a ceasefire.

All this sounds familiar and similar to what happened recently. On April 22, 2025, Pakistan-based terrorists launched a terror attack on innocent civilians at a popular tourist spot in Pahalgam, Kashmir, killing 26 tourists (singling out only the men). What followed next was the most devastating punishment that India has ever delivered on Pakistan's terror network in the form of Operation Sindoor (May 7-10, 2025). In four days of pin-pointed and extremely effective strikes, the Indian military struck nine terror bases across Pakistan and took out 11 military air-bases in Pakistan, bringing Pakistan to its knees in a matter of 96 hours. And if reports and analysis are to be believed, India's BrahMos missile strike on the Nur Khan Base in Pakistan, at the foothills of the Kirana Hills, crippled a key nuclear weapon storage facility too. Pakistan made a request for an immediate ceasefire.

If Kargil was a watershed moment for India in its conventional fighting capability, Pahalgam has set the bar against any future terror attack in India. Over two decades, India has steadily re-strategised its security policies, sending out a clear message to Pakistan and the world that India will not tolerate any future mis-adventure.

The lessons from Kargil

The context of the Kargil war was set in a period when India was tentative and vulnerable. It may be recalled that India had declared itself to be a nuclear weapon state in May 1998. India's nuclear tests prompted Pakistan too to test its nuclear devices within weeks. All of a sudden, South Asia was home to two nuclear-powered adversaries. India was threatened with economic sanctions by the western countries for having gone nuclear. In addition, India was not in a very strong position due to its weak economy and a coalition government at the Centre.

The fight against terrorism in Kashmir since 1990 and continuing insurgencies in the North-East led to the strengthening and the modernisation of India's military being put on the back burner. Kargil also happened in the backdrop of India's attempts at a reconciliation with Pakistan – Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had travelled to Lahore in February 1999 in what became a famous bus-ride across the border. This was also the time before the 9/11 terror attack on the Twin Towers in New York (September 11, 2001) and there was hardly any support for India's fight against Pakistan-based terror in Kashmir.

> If Kargil was a watershed moment in India's conventional fighting capability, Pahalgam has set the bar against any terror attack in the future

Kargil was, therefore, a rude wakeup call for India. It was the first war between India and Pakistan after 1971 and fought under the nuclear overhang. It demonstrated that limited war was still possible even between nuclear-armed states, provided the escalation was controlled. A Kargil Review Committee was set up which made many key recommendations, laying the foundation for many structural changes that have taken place over the years. One of the most significant shortcomings highlighted was the intelligence lapse. Neither military nor civilian intelligence agencies had worked on the possibility of any large-scale military infiltration by Pakistani forces in Kargil. The absence of real-time intelligence and effective aerial surveillance led to a delayed decision making and early losses. The war also exposed serious shortcomings in terms of equipment, logistics and the operational readiness of India's armed forces. India's troops lacked the wherewithal to fight war in high altitude areas as they did not have specialised high-altitude gear, adequate artillery support, and real-time communications.

The structural changes

A number of new agencies were set up such as the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) in 2002 and the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) in 2004. Measures to strengthen coordination between the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the Intelligence Bureau (IB), and military intelligence wings were undertaken, leading to a revamp of the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) and the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC). The appointment of a National Security Adviser (NSA) too was made a permanent fixture in the strategic decision-making hierarchy, headed by the Prime Minister. There were many other institutional and structural changes that were made in order to enhance the intelligence set up in India.

On the conventional front, the Kargil war was a timely lesson to modernise the military, in equipment and strategy. There was a clear realisation that India had few allies who would assist it in a time of war; therefore, modernisation and self-reliance had to be priorities. It led to the evolution of India's "Cold Start Doctrine", aimed at rapid mobilisation and swift, limited incursions without breaching the nuclear threshold. There was great emphasis on mountain warfare preparedness which included the raising of a Mountain Corps in the Indian Army. The war also highlighted the urgent need for joint coordination between the three wings of the armed forces, a unified command and operational coordination. Some of these have led changes such as the appointment of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) in 2019 and the process of setting up integrated theatre commands.

A key lesson from Kargil was the modernisation of equipment and weapon platforms, with an emphasis on home-grown technologies and self-reliance in production. The acquisition and the deployment of modern weapon platforms such as Rafale fighters, Apache attack helicopters, Chinook heavy-lift helicopters, and S-400 missile defence systems, home-grown artillery and BrahMos missiles are some of the results.

The long fight against terror

Unlike Kargil, which brought in massive changes in conventional military, India was slow in fighting terror proactively. For decades, Pakistan kept hurting India without any heavy costs to itself. Among the major terror incidents, the most important was the hijacking of an Indian Airlines flight, IC-814 on December 24, 1999, just after Kargil. In one of India's weak moments, New Delhi agreed to release dreaded terrorists.

The terror attack on Parliament, on December 13, 2001, led to a year-long mobilisation of Indian armed forces under 'Operation Parakram', but it did not result in any direct punishment to Pakistan. The 26/11 Mumbai terror attack (November 2008) – widely considered to be India's 9/11 moment – also did not lead to any punishment for Pakistan.

It was only after the Uri terror attack (September 18, 2016) that the strategy of a fight against terror began to take shape. The surgical strikes were not only a strong reply but also a statement of intent. Taking the intent further, following the terror attack on a Central Reserve Police Force convoy in Pulwama, Kashmir, on February 14, 2019, the Indian Air Force (IAF) launched strikes on a terror camp of the JeM in Balakot (February 26, 2019). This was the first time that the IAF had crossed into Pakistan airspace to launch a strike.

The recent Pahalgam attack has set a new threshold. By striking key terror locations and military assets deep into Pakistan, India has made it clear that the era of restraint and patience is over. Pakistan will have to pay a heavy price for any terror attack hereafter.

From Kargil to Pahalgam, India has had to learn many hard lessons. The good news is that India is no longer in any mood to relent. In May 2025, India's conventional military capability has displayed what it is capable of. 'Make in India' is bearing fruit, with many outstanding weapon platforms being made in India now. Fighting terror too has got a new meaning after Pahlagam. However, the Indian political and military leadership has to remain vigilant and stay ahead of the curve. There cannot be another Kargil or Pahlagam, ever.

The scientist who made 'mangroves' a buzzword

Selvam Vaithilingam

is a former Executive Director of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, and has four decades of experience in mangrove research and management

Until the late 1980s, the value of mangroves was primarily understood by the communities that lived around them and relied on them for fishery resources and their livelihoods. But today, the word "mangroves" has become a buzzword, whether in the area of disaster risk reduction in coastal areas, climate adaptation through carbon sequestration, enhancement of coastal fishery resources, or the conservation of shoreline bird sanctuaries, to name a few.

The turning point

Although the United Nations Development Programme and UNESCO initiated a regional project on mangrove research in 1988, it was in 1989 that M.S. Swaminathan proposed a leading role for mangroves in managing the impact of climate change in coastal areas. At the Climate Change and Human Responses conference in Tokyo in 1989, he explained that rising sea levels due to climate change would cause a salinisation of land and water resources in coastal areas, leading to the loss of food production and employment. A rise in the frequency of cyclones due to rising sea surface temperatures causes the loss of life, livelihoods, and natural resources. As a response, M.S. Swaminathan suggested immediate action for the sustainable management of mangrove wetlands. This was based on the principles of ecology, economics, and equity as well as research on the utilisation of mangrove genetic resources to develop new saline-tolerant crops (by transferring genes for salinity tolerance from mangroves to rice and other crops). A series of important developments found M.S. Swaminathan playing a pivotal role in mangrove restoration, conservation and management.

Thanks to M.S. Swaminathan's initiatives, the International Society for Mangrove Ecosystems (ISME) was established in 1990 in Okinawa, Japan – M.S. Swaminathan served as its Founding President till 1993.

He co-created the Charter for Mangroves and included it in the World Charter for Nature, prepared by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. To this day, this charter serves as a basis for mangrove conservation efforts at the global level.

> Mangrove forests, once considered to be marshy land, now occupy a central position in the coastal ecosystem and climate mitigation moves

The ISME conducted an assessment of the economic and environmental values of mangrove forests, including those in India, as well as the current state of their conservation. The ISME also organised a series of workshops on mangrove conservation and sustainable utilisation, published a manual of mangrove ecosystem restoration, and produced a World Mangrove Atlas. These activities, slowly but surely, transformed the common perception of what mangroves are: from an idea of them being marshy land waiting for conversion to other uses to their being central to a multiple-use coastal ecosystem. The ISME is promoting applied research, providing training to various stakeholders, and acting as a centre of knowledge products on mangroves.

Global infrastructure for conservation

Another vital contribution of M.S. Swaminathan was the development of the GLObal Mangrove database and Information System (GLOMIS), a searchable database on mangrove experts, research, and species, including the Mangrove Ecosystem Information Services, which focused on documenting genetic resources. In 1992, a team of scientists surveyed and evaluated 23 mangrove sites in South, Southeast Asia, and Oceania over nine countries, with scientific inputs from M.S. Swaminathan, to establish a global network of Mangrove Genetic Resource Centres. These centres are now conserved, monitored and managed as 'Protected Areas' by the respective governments.

At the national level, M.S. Swaminathan was instrumental in revolutionising India's management of mangroves. India has a long history of mangrove management, dating back to 1783. However, this period was marked by extensive clearance and reclamation of the Sundarbans mangrove forests, primarily for agriculture and settlements. The practice of clear-felling as a system of mangrove management was widespread in India from the British colonial period until 1980, when the Indian Forest (Conservation) Act was enacted.

The working plans prepared by the British, and later by the State Forest Departments of independent India, showed that attempts to restore mangroves in clear-felled areas yielded minimal results. On the other hand, local communities were blamed for the poor results. Here, researchers from the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, under the guidance of M.S. Swaminathan, played a key role.

Participatory research during 1993 and in the following years, first with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department and then with other States and local communities, revealed that changes in the biophysical conditions of the mangroves, due to the clear-felling system of management, were the primary reason for their degradation rather than resource utilisation by local communities. Based on this scientific evidence, a hydro-ecological method of mangrove restoration – commonly referred to as the fishbone canal method – was developed and pilot-tested in the mangroves of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and West Bengal.

This method later evolved into a Joint Mangrove Management programme, which the then Ministry of Environment and Forests, evaluated in 2000 through a committee and recommended for replication in all suitable areas. This resulted in more investment by the Central and State governments for mangrove restoration and conservation. The immense role played by mangroves during the 1999 Odisha super cyclone and the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, in reducing the loss of life and damage to property and natural resources, paved the way for valuing large-scale restoration of mangroves, in India and globally.

Rise in mangrove cover

World Mangrove Day (July 26) is also an occasion to look at whether there has been change. The India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023 says that the total mangrove cover in India is 4,991.68 km^2, which accounts for 0.15% of the country's total geographical area. If one compares the ISFR 2019 to the ISFR 2023, there has been a significant increase, of 16.68 km^2, in the country's mangrove coverage.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

India-U.K. trade deal

At a time when the global economic architecture is in the throes of stress in the wake of arbitrary, impulsive and imperious salvos of fiats fired by the Trump administration, the comprehensive trade agreement between India and the United Kingdom is fresh air (Front page, "India, U.K. ink trade deal, extend framework of ties", July 25). This pact should be used as a template for similar pacts with other countries such as the United States as well as the European Union.

Ravi Mathur,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Thailand vs Cambodia

It is shocking that there is a flare-up in Southeast Asia, between Thailand and Cambodia. In a world that is weary of conflicts, the earlier this faceoff is resolved the better it is.

R. Sampath,
Chennai

Dealing with China

India should exercise extreme caution in dealing with China. Seemingly peaceful gestures should not lead to a Trojan horse moment for India. China's plan for a dam in Tibet will give it significant leverage in dealing with India. New Delhi must be very alert.

Britto S.,
Sivagangi, Tamil Nadu

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Let's Crack UPSC Together

GROUND ZERO

Women discuss their debts in Dekuli Chatti village in Darbhanga district of Bihar. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

In Bihar, a matter of life and debt

In Bihar, increased borrowing from multiple sources, both institutional and informal lenders, has led to excessive debt burdens. Borrowers struggle to repay loans with high interest rates while dreading recovery agents, who intimidate and harass them. **Sobhana K. Nair** and **T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan** report on the lack of political thrust on bringing in any regulatory mechanism in the State that is set to go to the polls later this year

Chandra Devi, 53, holds up a loan slip, its creases more prominent than its text. It states that she borrowed a loan of ₹35,000, allegedly from RBL Bank, a private sector institution, in May 2024. "I have to repay the loan and an interest rate of *do taka* (2%)," Chandra declares. But the slip states that the interest rate is a hefty 25% over two years.

Chandra is sitting in a mango orchard with a group of women at Dekuli Chatti village in Darbhanga district of Bihar. Around her, children climb trees under an overcast sky. Some of them clamber to the top, others hang upside down from branches. Their mothers sit on a yellow plastic sheet spread over the grass. While watching their children's antics, they share their struggles on repaying dues. According to the 2022 caste survey of Bihar, 34% of households in the State earn ₹6,000 or less per month.

In June 2025, Piramal Enterprises, an Indian non-banking financial company (NBFC) focused on financial services, published a study. In it, they stated that the share of Indian households from economically weaker sections of society – that is, those earning ₹1-2 lakh a year – who borrowed from formal channels, such as banks and NBFCs, contracted by 4.2% between 2018-19 and 2022-23. At the same time, the share of households borrowing from informal or non-institutional sources of credit, such as money lenders, friends, families, and shopkeepers, grew by 5.8%. The data also shows that Bihar accounts for the highest share (18%) of households in India who borrow from non-institutional lenders. The study was based on data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, an independent private entity that serves as an economic think tank as well as a socioeconomic database.

However, many households that borrow from non-institutional lenders also borrow from microfinance institutions, which are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the country's central bank.

The RBI defines a microfinance loan as "a collateral-free loan given to a household having an annual income up to ₹3,00,000". According to Sa-Dhan, an RBI-approved self-regulatory body for the microfinance sector, there are 224 such institutions in India.

While loans from microfinance institutions help impoverished borrowers across India, borrowers are often unable to repay them and fall behind. They also sometimes run away, fearing that microfinance companies will demand repayment using strong-arm tactics. As a result, many households remain trapped in a cycle of debt.

When loans become nightmares

Chandra belongs to the Musahar community. Musahars are among the 18 Scheduled Castes in Bihar who were recognised as Mahadalits by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in 2007. They are socially and economically the most backward among Scheduled Castes.

Chandra says she doesn't know the name of the bank from which she borrowed a loan; instead, she identifies it by its location – Donar, a locality in Darbhanga. "I was asked to give my Aadhaar card, nothing else," she says, about the process of securing the loan.

> Since 2022, I have been given 1,100 households to track. At least 450 families who defaulted on their loans have disappeared
>
> **MAHESH**
> Recovery agent

The slip she holds says the loan was taken for 'agriculture-livestock/diary/poultry/cattle' purposes, but Chandra, the mother of two daughters and a son, says she borrowed it for her older daughter's wedding.

Before the wedding, the groom's family demanded a motorcycle as part of dowry. Chandra borrowed money from the village *mahajan* (money lender). When that didn't suffice, she went to a women's self help group (SHG). Finally, she secured a loan, allegedly from RBL Bank.

As Chandra's husband has been out of work for several months due to an illness, her family depends entirely on the amount her son sends home. "He sells apples in Kolkata, so he cannot always send money." she says. "After all, everything is so expensive these days."

Chandra also worries that she has a teenage daughter who will "soon be of marriageable age."

Punam Devi, 42, who is also from the Musahar community, keeps two documents close to her chest. One shows that she took a loan of ₹40,000, allegedly from Pyramid Finserve, an emerging NBFC, in July 2024. Punam borrowed the loan for her younger son, who had been diagnosed with meningitis. The other document shows that she borrowed another loan of ₹75,000, allegedly from Utkarsh Small Finance Bank Limited, a commercial bank focused on "providing banking and financial services, particularly to underserved and unserved sections of the population, primarily in rural and semi-urban areas." This loan, borrowed to pay for treatment of her husband who lost a leg in an accident, was cleared on March 23 this year with an interest rate of 28%, as per the document.

Punam says she had to pay installments every fortnight. After her husband's accident, the family's income is now nearly negligible, making it all the more challenging for them to repay the loan.

Both men were treated at private hospitals. "We don't get admission in government hospitals," she says. The other women nod along.

Parvati Devi, 38, says her husband works in Bengaluru, Karnataka, as a daily wage labourer. He left 15 days ago and will return only next year.

"We had to borrow money for our eldest daughter's wedding," says Parvati, who also belongs to the Musahar community. "We borrowed nearly ₹1.5 lakh from the local money lender four years ago. Unable to repay the loan, I took three loans from three microfinance institutions." Her total liability amounted to ₹1.35 lakh and she had to pay monthly installments of about ₹7,000.

A loan recovery agent at Bhawanipur village in Darbhanga district. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

> The recovery agent took away everything I had — a table, a chair, my bed, the cooker, the gas cylinder, and even my supply of wheat for the year. He stripped my house empty
>
> **SOMINI DEVI**
> Borrower

'Agents never fail to turn up'

Chandra, Punam, and Parvati sought loans for weddings or for treatments in hospitals and struggled to repay the amounts. Many of these women accessed microfinance institutions through group lending. In this process, borrowers form small groups and the members of the group are jointly liable for each other's loans.

Banks appoint agents to recover overdue loan payments or outstanding debts. The women say recovery agents never fail to turn up, and the amount of money their families have is usually never enough to meet the final sum.

This week, a recovery agent stood at Parvati's door, threatening and abusing her the entire day. "I was not scared," Parvati says. "I shouted at him as well. He said he would file a case against me. I told him, so be it." The recovery agent left only after she managed to put together the amount, which fell short of ₹1,000, she says.

Mina Devi is due to pay her monthly instalment of ₹2,450, but she is ₹50 short. "He (the recovery agent) won't take the amount until I give him the full amount," she complains. Mina worries about his response. "Last time he told me, 'Why don't you go to the road and beg? And in the process if you die, the loan will be waived off.'" According to the RBI, when a borrower dies and there is no collateral, the lender can recover the amount from the legal heirs, and only up to the limit of what the heirs inherit.

Mina's husband spends at least six months working in the fields in Punjab, so she has to deal with the agents on her own. "When a male member of the family is not around, the agent hangs around for hours," she says.

Rekha Devi has three loans to repay, with the total liability amounting to about ₹1 lakh. She says, "He (agent) asked me why I don't sell my body if I have no money to pay the instalment."

The women say the agents often threaten to take away possessions they have painstakingly collected over the years – beds, pressure cookers, gas cylinders, even the odd plastic chair.

In Somini Devi's case, this became a reality. Somini's husband is no more. She has six children – three daughters and three sons – and all of them are married. She says she has been left alone to repay the loans she borrowed for their weddings and for other expenses.

"The recovery agent took away everything I had – a table, a chair, my bed, the cooker, the gas cylinder, and even my supply of wheat for the year. He stripped my house empty." When asked if she reported the incident to the police, she stares blankly. "How can we?" she murmurs.

The women say at least 20-25 families in their village alone have fled fearing recovery agents. As they start counting and naming the families, many of them turn towards Pawan Devi.

Pawan took loans from five microfinance institutions for her son's wedding, but she has been unable to repay the amount. Pawan and her family fled the village, spent more than a year in Punjab, and returned only last week.

Pawan cannot recall the name of the village where she and her family stayed. "Barring the biting cold, it was better there," she says. "The landlord didn't charge us for electricity or water. There were clean toilets. And we had a regular income working in the fields." Pawan says what she cherished the most about her stay in Punjab was the absence of recovery agents.

But the agents she dreads are now back at her doorstep. "They come every other day. Sometimes they stand outside for hours. Sometimes they enter the house and start rifling through our papers. The other day, they took away my son's Aadhaar card," she says.

Around 30 kilometres away at Navtol village in Bhawanipur panchayat of Darbhanga district, Mahesh Kumar Roy, who says he is a recovery agent with Muthoot FinCorp, is on his daily rounds of the village. Mahesh, who hails from Darbhanga, goes from house to house on his motorcycle. He pulls out the sheaves of papers rolled up between his motorcycle handles and runs his finger along the names.

"Since 2022, when I joined the company, I have been given 1,100 households to track. At least 450 families who defaulted on their loans have disappeared. I make regular rounds, but all I see is locked homes," he says. Mahesh adds that people "disappear only after they have paid 15-16 installments" and "after we have managed to recover at least 60% of the principal amount."

Mahesh prides himself as a "decent" agent. Aware of the reputation that recovery agents have, he looks at the crowd gathered around him and asks them whether he is intimidating or threatening. They all say 'no'.

Rules on paper

The RBI issued exhaustive guidelines in 2022 collating the piecemeal directives it had issued earlier. It said that the lenders must "provide the flexibility of repayment periodicity on microfinance loans as per borrowers' requirement". That is, the repayment period of the loan must be moulded to the requirements of the borrowers, rather than the needs of the lender. To ensure that microfinance loans do not unduly burden the borrowers, the RBI directions also include a provision that says each regulated lender must ensure that the monthly repayment burden of a household should not exceed 50% of the monthly income of that household.

RBI also has a separate set of guidelines for recovery agents. It defined what would be deemed as harsh methods, such as use of threatening or abusive language, persistently calling the borrower and/or calling the borrower before 9:00 a.m. and after 6:00 p.m., harassing relatives, friends, or co-workers of the borrower, publishing the name of borrowers, the use or threat of use of violence or other similar means to harm the borrower or borrower's family/assets/reputation, or misleading the borrower about the extent of the debt or the consequences of non-repayment.

However, the regulations on the interest to be charged on these loans simply say that the interest rates and other charges and fees on microfinance loans "should not be usurious", and that the RBI would scrutinise this aspect of the loans.

Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Assam have specific regulations for microfinance. Several other States such as Kerala, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh have laws regulating money lenders, which also include microfinance institutions. Assembly elections are scheduled in Bihar in October, but there is no political thrust in the State on bringing in any regulatory mechanism in this regard.

Jayati Ghosh, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, U.S., says it is not surprising that the RBI guidelines for microfinance institutions are not being implemented since there is often a lack of implementation of State policy. She also says there are fundamental flaws in the microfinancing model. "While it makes credit accessible for the poor, there is high interest and lack of monitoring of how repayment is ensured, which allows for threats, intimidation, and pressure to take on multiple loans," she says. "In many places, linkages with banks through the SBL (SHG-Bank Linkage Scheme) have been provided, but these also provide limited funds. Only in States where these SHGs are effectively co-operatives that create income-generating opportunities (such as Kerala's Kudumbashree) has this been more successful."

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Let's Crack UPSC Together

From Page One

LS to take up motion to remove HC judge

Speaker Om Birla is expected to announce a three-member inquiry committee to probe the charges against Justice Varma.

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh, now the officiating presiding officer, has been part of the consultation with the government and within Parliament over the issue. The three-member committee will include either the Chief Justice of India or a Supreme Court judge, a High Court Chief Justice and a distinguished jurist.

Former Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, on July 21, informed the House that he received a notice seeking the judge's removal. "It is signed by more than 50 members of the Council of States and thus it meets the numerical requirement of signing by members of Parliament for setting in motion a process for removal of a High Court judge," Mr. Dhankhar had said.

At the same time, he had directed the Secretary-General to find out if a similar motion had been moved in the Lok Sabha or not. He went on describing the provisions of the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968, and said that the "Secretary-General will take necessary steps in this direction." The Opposition insisted that this should be treated as acceptance of the motion, signed by 63 Rajya Sabha MPs from the Opposition.

Following an inquiry by a Supreme Court committee into the cash recovery row, then Chief Justice of India, Sanjiv Khanna, had forwarded the committee report to the President and the Prime Minister, paving the way for the motion.

7 children die in Rajasthan school collapse

Of 28 children injured, eight with severe injuries referred to Jhalawar district hospital; the building had reportedly developed cracks and weakened due to continuous rainfall; school principal, four teachers suspended for negligence and not informing officials about the building's condition

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

Seven children were killed and 28 injured when a portion of the roof of a government school collapsed in Rajasthan's Jhalawar district on Friday. The building had reportedly developed cracks and weakened under the impact of continuous rainfall over the past few days.

The roof of one of the five classrooms in the Government Upper Primary School at Piplodi village in Manohar Thana block caved in, just as the children were assembling for morning prayers. About 30 students of Classes 6 and 7, buried under the rubble, were pulled out in a frantic rescue operation.

Scores of people, including the parents and villagers, searched through the mounds of debris, bricks and stones to evacuate the children and rushed them to the hospital. The injured students were first taken to the community health centre (CHC) at Manohar Thana, from where eight in a critical condition were referred to the District Hospital in Jhalawar.

Tragedy unfolds: Locals taking part in the rescue work after the government school building collapsed in Piplodi village in Jhalawar district of Rajasthan on Friday. PTI

Doctors at the CHC declared seven children dead during various stages of treatment, while several others were in the intensive care unit (ICU). The angry villagers, who said their complaints to the officers about the school's dilapidated condition had elicited no response, blocked the Manohar Thana-Aklera road by staging a dharna with the demand for compensation.

'Did not figure in list'

Jhalawar District Collector Ajay Singh Rathore said the school in Piplodi village had not figured in the list of weak buildings in the district sent by the Education Department recently. "Action will be taken against whoever is found guilty after investigation," Mr. Rathore said.

According to the students' accounts, there was a persistent water seepage in the 40-year-old school building and some tree branches had grown into the walls of the classrooms. Some of the students also reportedly noticed the plaster falling from the roof in the morning.

While Education Minister Madan Dilawar rushed to Piplodi after cancelling his tour to Bharatpur-Deeg, the department placed the school's principal, Meena Garg, and four teachers under suspension. They were accused of negligence and not informing the higher authorities about the building's condition, besides failing to make any alternative arrangements for the safety of students.

After Friday's accident, the State government is likely to conduct an infrastructure audit of all buildings of government schools and anganwadi centres, especially those situated in the remote areas. The District Education Officers (DEOs) will also issue circulars to the schools warning them against holding classes in structurally compromised buildings.

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi were among those who condoled the loss of children's lives in Piplodi. Ms. Murmu said the news of the collapse of the school roof was "extremely tragic". Governor Haribhau Bagade, Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma, former Chief Ministers Ashok Gehlot and Vasundhara Raje, Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani, and other leaders also expressed grief.

Maldives President Muizzu thanks India

Mr. Modi's visit is seen as reflecting a significant improvement in India's relationship with a crucial neighbour. "Maldives is an important part of India's 'neighbourhood first' policy," Mr. Modi said in his media statement in Male.

In a social media post on the release of a stamp to mark 60 years of India-Maldives friendship, he said it commemorated "a very cherished friendship".

Following talks between the leaders, the two sides exchanged four Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and signed three agreements taking forward cooperation in several key sectors, including fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, environment, digital solutions, and finalising the terms of reference to launch negotiations of a Free Trade Agreement.

In an indication that economic partnership remains a major cornerstone of bilateral ties, India agreed to extend a fresh Line of Credit (LoC) of ₹4,850 crore, to support the island as it faces an enduring twin deficit problem. This is the first time that such credit is being extended to the Maldives in Indian Rupee. "We expect several infrastructure projects to be carried out using this LoC," Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri later told a press conference in Male.

Significantly, the two countries signed an amendatory agreement on reducing the Maldives's annual debt repayment obligations. Following "a sharp 40%" reduction, as Mr. Misri put it in the media conference, Male would have to pay $29 million annually, instead of $51 million, as it repays an earlier $800-million LoC extended by India.

Observers of India-Maldives ties see the renewed collaboration between the countries as a necessary and positive development.

Ministry blocks 25 OTT platforms over 'obscene content'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Blocked platforms include Ullu, ALTT, Hulchul, Big Shots App, Desiflix, Jalva and Boomex

The Information & Broadcasting Ministry has directed the blocking of websites and apps of 25 OTT platforms for allegedly carrying obscene, vulgar, and in some cases, pornographic content.

The action was taken in consultation with the Ministries of Home Affairs, Women and Child Development, Electronics and Information Technology, the Department of Legal Affairs, industry bodies such as FICCI and CII, and experts in the fields of women and child rights.

"Utilising the provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2000, and the IT Rules, 2021, notifications have been issued to the various intermediaries to ensure that access to the concerned websites and apps is disabled," a source said on Friday.

The contents of 26 websites and 14 apps – nine on Google Play Store, five on Apple App Store – have been blocked. The OTT platforms, which have been blocked include Big Shots App, Desiflix, Boomex, NeonX VIP, Navarasa Lite, Gulab, Kangan, Bull, ShowHit, Jalva, Wow Entertainment, Look Entertainment, Hitprime, Fugi, Feneo, ShowX, Sol Talkies, Adda TV, ALTT, HotX VIP, Hulchul, MoodX, Triflicks, Ullu, and Mojflix.

According to the government, the objectionable content included sexual innuendos and long portions of sexually explicit scenes involving nudity, deemed pornographic in nature. "There was hardly any storyline, theme or message in a social context," an official pointed out.

Will Modi retire at 75, asks Cong. chief citing RSS view; Rahul calls PM 'all show'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Taking a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday asked if Mr. Modi would retire at 75, as suggested by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Referring to RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's statement that politicians should retire at 75, Mr. Kharge said that citing this rule, Mr. Modi removed veteran BJP leaders such as L. K. Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi. "Now he (PM) is completing 75 years. When will he move out? That issue is also before us. Will he go? Modi *ji* ousted all others. He has nothing to do with the country. He is only worried about his chair," Mr. Kharge told a gathering.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said he has met the Prime Minister in person a few times and found him to be "all show and no substance". He said the media has "inflated the Prime Minister's balloon but there was not much substance in him".

Mallikarjun Kharge

"Earlier, I had not met him, but now I have met him two to three times. Now I understand there is nothing," Mr. Gandhi said.

The Congress leaders were addressing a *Bhagidari Nyay Sammelan* of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) during which Mr. Kharge said the party has prepared a plan to bring the OBCs to the forefront. He urged all Congress Chief Ministers to launch new welfare schemes for OBCs.

Urging backward sections of the society to unite against the BJP, Mr. Kharge said that had the Congress got 25 more seats in the Lok Sabha election, it could have come to power.

Analysing his 21 years in politics, Mr. Gandhi said he committed a "mistake" in not protecting the interests of the OBCs in entirety. He said his approach was right in a few issues - such as Land Acquisition Bill, MGNREGA, Food Bill, fight for tribals - even though there may have been shortcomings.

"But when I look back, I can see clearly that in one thing I was lacking, I committed one mistake – I did not protect the OBC section the way I should have," he said, adding that he had not understand the issues of OBCs earlier.

SC extends relief granted to Rahul in Savarkar case

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday extended the stay of summons issued to Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi in a defamation case accusing him of making derogatory remarks against Hindutva ideologue V.D. Savarkar during his Bharat Jodo Yatra in Maharashtra last year.

A Bench headed by Justices Dipankar Datta listed the case after four weeks, giving the complainant, Nripendra Pandey, a fortnight's time to file his response to the challenge filed by Mr. Gandhi in the top court.

The Court had stayed an Uttar Pradesh trial court summons issued to the Congress leader in an order in May while cautioning him from making "statements against our freedom fighters who gave us freedom".

Caught in crackdown against illegal immigrants, two Assam residents return home with trauma and scars

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

May 23 started like any other Friday for Khairul Islam. In the afternoon, he visited the police station for his weekly signature in the register – a trip he has been making at least since 2020 when he was released on bail from a "foreigners' detention camp" in Assam.

Around 11.30 p.m., he woke up to an unusual knock on the door of his small house in Morigaon district. "It was the border police," he said.

Within days, Mr. Islam found himself in no-man's land between India and Bangladesh. He said his hands and eyes were tied with *gamchas* (traditional towel) as he was transported to Bangladesh, with no opportunity to even make a phone call until he was already across the border.

A government school-teacher, Mr. Islam, 52, lives with his wife and children in Mikirbheta police station area. He has been teaching Classes 1 to 5 at Thangshali Khandapukuri LP primary school since 1996. In 2016, he was declared a foreigner by a tribunal and spent a couple of years appealing his case. With the Gauhati High Court having turned down his appeal and his case pending in the Supreme Court, he has been reporting at the local police station every week.

However, little did he expect that he would be among thousands of "undocumented migrants" that India had been "pushing back" into Bangladesh. The "pushback" exercise had begun after the Union Home Ministry asked police across the country to identify Bangladeshis who had illegally entered India and were living on forged documents.

The Home Ministry's direction, which came in the wake of the regime change in Bangladesh last year, gained fresh urgency after the Pahalgam terror attack in April, with data reported by *The Hindu* showing that about 2,500 people had been "pushed back" by the end of June.

Rahima Begum and Khairul Islam. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"I remember being scared," Mr. Islam says of his journey across the border in a "large vehicle" in which he was blindfolded and his hands tied. "Throughout the journey, I kept reasoning with them (officials) that I am an Indian citizen but they would not listen," Mr. Islam said. "I never thought I would be thrown out of my own country," he told *The Hindu*, adding all were handed about 200 to 300 takas (Bangladeshi currency) before being deboarded.

Mr. Islam said the group crossed the no-man's land and met locals, who informed security officials in Bangladesh. After spending about a day with the officials, Mr. Islam said the group started making its way back to India. "But suddenly, we started hearing gunshots from the Indian side. They were firing rubber pellets at us. A few more hours later, we realised that India was now asking Bangladesh for proof that we were Indians."

It was after this that Mr. Islam got the chance to make a phone call for the first time. "The Bangladeshi officers asked us to call home, get documents if we had, and arranged to have it sent over. After that, all I remember was being ferried from one place to another until I got home. When I reached home, I found out that my wife had to file an application for my return to the district Superintendent of Police office as well," he said, adding he was the only one in his batch to return.

"The moment I was brought back, I was taken to the SP office. All he could say was, 'This was a mistake. Please don't think too much of it and don't feel too bad'," Mr. Islam recalled.

As he tries to recover from the trauma, he says painful memories of his journey across the border still flash in his mind.

Rahima Begum, 50, was taken away from her home in Golaghat district on the eastern border of the State, during the same week as Mr. Islam. And like him, Ms. Rahima too was among several Indians caught in the police crackdown on illegal immigrants.

In a matter of days, Ms. Rahima was crawling across paddy fields under the midnight sky in the no-man's land, with about 22 fresh stitches on her abdomen from a kidney-stone related surgery she had undergone days before. She was too scared to walk. Ms. Rahima is now in a "serious condition" at a hospital in Assam, her husband Malekuddin Chowdhury said. "After she returned, we saw that many of the 22 stitches had come apart."

A daily wage labourer, Mr. Chowdhury has not been working for a few years now since he lost his sight partially. His teenage sons now support the family with their daily wages.

As Ms. Rahima recovers in hospital, Mr. Chowdhury said he was running out of things to sell for her treatment. "Whatever livestock we had... ducks, chicken, goats... we sold it all."

Meghalaya HC seeks govt. action after coal vanishes from depots

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The High Court of Meghalaya has asked the State government to find out how 3,950.15 metric tonnes (MT) of illegally mined coal vanished from two coal depots. The missing coal was highlighted in the 31st interim report submitted to the court on Thursday by Justice B.P. Katakey, a retired judge appointed a few years ago to monitor coal mining and transportation issues in Meghalaya.

3,950 MT missing

According to the report, the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA) recorded 3,960.95 MT of coal at the designated depots in Diengngan and Rajaju villages some time ago.

Diengngan is in the Ri-Bhoi and Rajaju in the West Khasi Hills districts, respectively.

However, during a recent inspection by the district authorities, only 2.5 MT of coal with residue was found instead of the inventoried 1.839.03 MT. Similarly, only 8 MT of coal with residue was found at the Rajaju depot against 2,121.62 MT of coal recorded by the MBDA earlier. The missing volume worked out to 3,950.15 MT

In an order on Thursday, a Division Bench of Justice H.S. Thangkhiew and Justice W. Diengdoh said it was a matter of concern that the illegally mined coal had been lifted and transported by unknown people.

The court then directed the State government to "take urgent action and hold accountable the persons or officials, under whose watch" this was allowed to happen. It also asked the government to trace the people who lifted the coal illegally.

The court observed that the government did not provide any information other than indicating that FIRs had been lodged.

Let's Crack UPSC Together

Govt. running away from debate on SIR: Trinamool

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

On a day the government indicated that it is unlikely to allow a debate on the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, the Trinamool Congress's Parliamentary Party leader in the Rajya Sabha, Derek O'Brien, said it was a top priority for his party.

Mr. O'Brien said the Trinamool would be stepping up its protest. "The Opposition wants the Houses to run, but it is the government that has been running away from the debate on the revision of electoral rolls going on in Bihar and to be implemented in other States, including West Bengal, next year," he said. The Opposition was considering carrying out a protest march to the Election Commission's door, he said.

"You are trying to remove people from the voters' lists. This amounts to total interference and blatant cheating," he added. He accused the Election Commission of operating like "BJP's branch office".

If all Opposition parties are demanding a debate on the SIR exercise, why is the government reluctant to hold it? he asked.

Deadlock continues over revision of Bihar poll roll

While the Opposition is insisting that a debate must be held in the House, the govt. has pointed out the problems in agreeing to a discussion; Parliament will discuss Operation Sindoor next week

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

A meeting of senior political leaders with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday decided that the Lower House of Parliament would function smoothly, as both Houses are all set to take up the special discussion on the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor next week.

But Friday's meeting failed to break the deadlock over the Opposition's insistence on having a debate on the special intensive revision (SIR) of Bihar's electoral rolls.

From citing precedence when former Speaker Balram Jhakhar had rejected a discussion on the Election Commission (EC) to pointing out the autonomous status of the EC to asking which Minister would reply on behalf of the EC, the government managers pointed out the problems in agreeing to a discussion on SIR.

"The government is hiding its intent behind various technical reasons. They say if a discussion on the Election Commission and electoral process are held within the House, then who will answer? I would like to tell them that don't give these excuses and hold a discussion. There are many provisions under which you can discuss the electoral process," Congress's Deputy Leader in the Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi, told presspersons.

"But yes, if the intent is vote theft, then you can hide behind various technical grounds," Mr. Gogoi added.

The issue of SIR, however, continued to stall proceedings in Parliament as both Houses failed to transact any business for the fifth straight day.

In one voice: Rahul Gandhi with other leaders during a protest against the Bihar electoral roll revision, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

'Thrown in bin'

Opposition leaders of the INDIA bloc also registered their protest against the SIR process by symbolically tearing posters with 'SIR' written on them and putting them in a 'disposal bin'. Leaders belonging to the Congress, DMK, Samajwadi Party, Trinamool Congress, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), and the Left parties, among others, took out a protest march with the banner "SIR- *Loktantra Par Vaar* (assault on democracy)" from the Mahatma Gandhi statue within the Parliament complex to the entrance of the Parliament building.

Soon after, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi tore the poster with SIR written on it and put it in the trash bin as a symbolic rejection of the exercise.

In a post on X, Mr. Kharge said it is "very unfortunate that a constitutional institution like the EC is supporting the BJP-RSS in this conspiracy of 'vote *bandi*'."

"The RSS-BJP has always wanted to deprive the weaker sections of the society of the right to vote, and now by using SIR, it is hell-bent on fulfilling its years-old intention," Mr. Kharge alleged.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress's Lok Sabha member from Wayanad, said: "Our Constitution makers have given the right to vote to every Indian. Taking away the right to vote from the poor people is like destroying democracy. This is not acceptable".

Modi overtakes Indira, clocks second-longest continuous stint as PM

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday became the second longest-serving Prime Minister of India in consecutive terms, surpassing former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's record.

He completed 4,078 days in office in an unbroken tenure on Friday. Indira Gandhi had served for 4,077 days continuously, from January 24, 1966, to March 24, 1977. She was re-elected in 1980 and remained in office until her death in 1984.

Marking the occasion, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Sudhanshu Trivedi said, "Today, PM Modi has become the second longest-serving PM of the country with an uninterrupted tenure. When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi became the Prime Ministers of the country, it was the result of the prevailing circumstances. However, PM Modi has achieved this record with the mandate of the people."

The record for the longest unbroken tenure is held by India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. However, Mr. Modi has matched Nehru in winning three successive Lok Sabha elections – in 2014, 2019, and 2024.

Narendra Modi

This milestone also coincides with another: Mr. Modi is the longest-serving non-Congress Prime Minister, and the first such leader to complete two full terms. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, also of the BJP, was elected thrice – in 1996 (for a 13-day government), in 1998 (for 13 months), and in 1999, when he served a full term. However, he did not complete more than one full term in office.

Another record held by Mr. Modi is that of being the elected head of government at both the State and Central levels for the longest continuous stint. He was appointed Chief Minister of Gujarat in 2001 and held the post until 2014, when he became Prime Minister.

Centre skips West Bengal in MGNREGS dues reply

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Rural Development Ministry, while answering to a question in the Rajya Sabha on pending dues to the States under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), skipped any reference to West Bengal. The scheme, which provides 100 days of wage employment to rural households, has remained suspended in the State since March 2022.

On Friday, in a written reply to a question asked by Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien on pending dues to the States under three heads of wages, material and administration, the Ministry only gave data for 33 States and Union Territories without any reference to West Bengal.

In an order on June 18, the Calcutta High Court had directed the Union government to resume the scheme in the State. On Tuesday, to another question, asked by Trinamool MP Mahua Moitra in Lok Sabha, on what steps the government is taking for timely compliance with the order, the Ministry replied: "The order is being studied in the Ministry to decide further course of action."

66 lakh voters may be left out of draft roll: EC data

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Almost 66 lakh voters are unlikely to make it to the draft electoral roll to be published on August 1, according to Election Commission (EC) data released on Friday, the last day for submission of enumeration forms in the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) process.

Bihar had over 7.89 crore voters according to the 2025 electoral rolls.

The forms of 7.23 crore electors have been received and digitised, and the names of all these electors will be included in the draft electoral roll, the EC said in a statement. It said that the digitisation of forms of the remaining electors will also be completed by August 1, along with booth-level officer (BLO) reports.

Bihar had over 7.89 crore voters according to the 2025 electoral rolls. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

During the month-long SIR exercise, which began on June 24, the BLOs have reported the names of approximately 22 lakh deceased electors, 7 lakh registered in more than one location, and 35 lakh who have either permanently migrated or could not be traced. In addition, the enumeration forms of approximately 1.2 lakh electors are yet to be received.

From August 1 to September 1, any elector or political party may fill the prescribed forms and submit claims to the Electoral Registration Officers for any eligible elector who has been excluded, or file objections for the removal of any ineligible elector.

Opposition parties, however, have branded the SIR as an attempt to bring in the National Register of Citizens through a "backdoor" route. The contentious exercise has been challenged in the Supreme Court, and a hearing is scheduled on July 28.

V-P election process begins; EC appoints Returning Officer

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Friday kicked off the process for holding Vice-Presidential polls by appointing the Secretary-General of the Rajya Sabha, P.C. Mody, as the Returning Officer.

The poll body has also appointed Garima Jain, Joint Secretary, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, and Vijay Kumar, Director, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, as Assistant Returning Officers.

The Vice-Presidential election has been necessitated due to the sudden resignation of Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday, which has led to a rare mid-term vacancy in the second-highest constitutional position. The election to the office of Vice-President is governed by The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952 and The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Rules, 1974.

The Vice-President is elected by an Electoral College, which consists of members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, including nominated members. According to the rules, the nomination paper has to be subscribed by at least 20 electors as proposers and at least 20 electors as seconders and has to be presented to the Returning Officer, between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on any day appointed for the purpose.

Govt. silent on reforms to address judicial misconduct

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

At a time when the government is seeking to remove Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma after burnt currency notes were found at his official residence in Delhi this March, the Union Law Minister, in a written reply in Parliament, did not specify the government's stance on legislative reforms regarding the Supreme Court's in-house procedure to address judicial misconduct.

Responding to a question in the Lok Sabha whether reforms were required in the top court's procedure, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal only described the existing rules and regulations for the removal of judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts and did not speak on the need for reforms. "Article 124 (4) provides that a judge of the Supreme Court shall not be removed from his office except by an order of the President passed after an address by each House of Parliament supported by a majority of the total membership of that House and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members of that House present and voting has been presented to the President in the same session for such removal on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity," the Minister said in the reply.

Arjun Ram Meghwal

"For Judges of the High Court, Article 217(1)(b) stipulates that a Judge may be removed from his office by the President in the manner provided for in clause (4) of Article 124 for the removal of a Judge of the Supreme Court," he said.

The Minister skipped the reply to a question about steps being taken on reforms, and if there has been any consultation with experts on this.

Received over 6,900 inputs on draft data rules: Ministry

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, have received 6,915 inputs and comments from the public, firms, and other stakeholders, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology told Parliament on Friday.

The volume of comments reflects the back-to-back consultation sessions the government has held since the draft was published in January, with a lengthy written comment period, as well as sessions with State governments, private industry, and other groups of invited stakeholders. The comments are being held in confidence, the Ministry said.

The DPDP Rules (and the parent Act) provide for penalties against firms that fail to take effective measures to safeguard personal information.

UPSC bars candidate for three years over exam misconduct

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has debarred a candidate from appearing in all future examinations for a period of three years after the individual was found in possession of incriminating material during an examination, the commission said on Friday.

In a post on LinkedIn, the UPSC said the candidate was found guilty under Rule 12(1)(h) of the Examination Rules – "being in possession of or using unfair means during the examination".

"Accordingly, UPSC has taken stringent disciplinary action in line with standardisation of penalties by cancelling the candidature for the current year's examination and debarred the individual from appearing in all future examination(s)/selection(s) to be conducted by the Commission for a period of three years," it added.

It further said such measures are essential to preserve the sanctity of the selection process and ensure that merit remains the sole criterion for recruitment to government services.

'Strict action'

Commenting on the action, UPSC Chairman Ajay Kumar said, "UPSC is firmly committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and fairness in its examination processes. Any candidate found guilty of indulging in unfair means or misconduct during examinations faces strict disciplinary action, including debarment from future examinations, as the strictest action."

"This is the sole reason why UPSC, for the last 100 years, has been an epitome of merit and a fair system," Mr. Kumar added.

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Pulikeshinagar Division, BBMP Office Building,
Robertson Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru

No.: EE/PN/TEND/07/2025-26 Date: 25.07.2025

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

(Only through KPPP Portal) Two Cover

The Executive Engineer (Pulikeshinagar Division), BBMP, Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible Contractors registered in Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the construction of works detailed in the table below. **(Standard Tender Document KW4).**

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Comprehensive development of roads, drains & culverts at Old Bagalur Layout 1st to 28th Cross Roads & Surrounding area (Block No. 1/1, 1/2, 2, 3/2, 4/1, 12/2, 16, 18, 14, 12/1, 11) New Bagalur Layout 1st to 18th Cross Roads & Surrounding area (Block No. 19, 21, 30/2, 23, 24/2, 25/1, 26) in Ward No. 74 Old Ward No. 60 Sagayapuram. **(2nd Call). Approx. Value of Work (Rs. in Lakhs):** 500.00, **EMD (in Rs.):** 7,50,000.00

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPPP portal of the Government of Karnataka from **30.07.2025, 4:00 p.m. (2)** Pre bid meeting will be held **05.08.2025** at **3:00 p.m.** in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Pulikeshinagar Division, Robertson Road, Bengaluru-560001.**(3)** Tenders must be submitted online through KPPP Portal on or before **4:00 p.m.** on **25.08.2025** and the opening of the tenders will be as per KPPP portal guidelines. **(4)** Technical bids will be opened on the website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** in the office of the Executive Engineer, Pulikeshinagar Division, BBMP, Bengaluru on **26.08.2025** at **4:30 p.m.** if possible or next working day. Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Pulikeshinagar Division, BBMP

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA - DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore.
Email ID : sedcbls@yahoo.com
"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO.- ACEDCBLS-07/2025-26

1.	Name of Work	Drainage Works (Under D.I.P. Scheme)
2.	Total No. of Project	1 No of Individual work
3.	Estimated Cost of individual works	Rs.3,36,52,156/- (Excluding G.S.T.)
4.	Period of Completion	11 (Eleven) Calendar months
5.	Bid Identification Number	ACEDCBLS/DDBLS-01-07-2025-26
6.	Date & Time of availability of Bid document in the Portal	From Dt. 28.07.2025 at 10.00 hours to Dt.11.08.2025 at 17.00 hours
7.	Date of Opening of technical bid	Dt.12.08.2025 at 11.30 hours in the Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore.
8.	Date of Opening of Financial bid	To be uploaded in portal
9.	Class of Contractor	"A" Class
10.	Date of Lottery (if required)	To be notified
11.	Procurement Officer / Name & address of the Officer Inviting Bids	Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore.

Further details can be seen from the Govt. Web site : www.tendersorissa.gov.in .
A-425 : **Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore.**
OIPR-32190/11/0021/2526

WATCO
OFFICE OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR
Ground Floor, Unnati Bhawan,
H.B.Colony, Satyanagar, Bhubaneswar-751007, Odisha, India
Telefax: - +91-674-2571444; E-mail – directorprojects@watcoodisha.in

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) - Bid Identification No. WATCO(P)-04/2025-26, Dtd.23.07.2025

WATCO No.5304 / Date: 23.07.2025

1. Name of the work : 1. Upgradation of 4 MLD WTP to 6 MLD WTP at Industrial Estate, Jharsuguda for improvement of W/S to Jharsuguda Municipality.
2. Provision for procurement & installation of DG sets for 43 MLD intake well and WTP at Panposh in connection with 24x7 DFT water supply to Rourkela Town.
3. Construction of R.C.C Supporting Pillar and Laying of 1000 mm dia MS Pipe Clear Water Rising Main at Kathajodi Site for Improvement of Water Supply System to Cuttack City.
4. Laying of distribution water supply pipeline in newly developed areas of Jagatpur under WATCO Section, Nayabazar, Cuttack.
5. Laying of distribution water supply pipeline in newly developed areas of Pratapnagari area Under CMC.
2. Estimated cost :- Rs.151.92 Lakh to Rs.337.75 Lakh
3. Period of completion :- 03 (Three) to 12 (Twelve) Months.
4. Date & time of availability of bid document :- From 11.00 AM of Dt.30.07.2025 to 5.00 PM of 13.08.2025 in the portal.
5. Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal :- 5.00 PM of 13.08.2025
6. Date & time of opening of technical bids :- 12.30 PM of 14.08.2025
7. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid :- DIRECTOR, PROJECTS, WATCO, Telefax:- 0674-2571444, E-Mail : directorprojects@watcoodisha.in
8. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only.

Further details can be seen from the web site www.tendersodisha.gov.in
C :742 **Director, Projects, WATCO**
OIPR-13194/11/0059/2526

UPSC Together
Let's Crack It

INBRIEF

NIA issues notice against Hizb-ul-Mujahideen chief

A special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court on Friday issued a proclamation against Hizb-ul-Mujahideen chief and United Jihad Council supremo Mohammad Yousuf Shah, alias Syed Salahuddin, a resident of Soibugh, Budgam, in an Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) case. The special designated court has officially declared the accused as absconding and issued a proclamation requiring his appearance, in connection with "serious charges under the UAPA and the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC)".

Soldier killed in landmine blast in J&K's Poonch district

An Army soldier was killed and two others were injured in a landmine blast near the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Friday. A spokesman of the Army's White Knight Corps said Agniveer Lalit Kumar of 7 JAT Regiment made the supreme sacrifice while on an area domination patrol in general area of Krishna Ghati brigade following a mine blast. "We stand with the bereaved family in this hour of grief," the Army said. Officials said the injured were immediately evacuated and airlifted to Army Base Hospital Udhampur for treatment.

States can't seek delimitation claiming parity with J&K: SC

SC explains that unlike the Union Territory, all States are bound by a constitutional embargo on delimitation till a post-2026 Census; J&K delimitation was done on the basis of the 2011 Census

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday held that the Centre did not discriminate against the electorates of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana or dampen their "legitimate expectations" by conducting the delimitation of constituencies in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in 2022.

A Bench of Justices Surya Kant and N. Kotiswar Singh said that States could not claim "parity" by arguing that delimitation was done in Jammu and Kashmir, but not for them. "That would be like treating unequals equally," the court observed.

> The two States in question (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir operate in distinct constitutional domains. Any delimitation exercise carried out in one cannot serve as a benchmark or ground of comparison for the other. The delimitation undertaken for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir cannot be mechanically extended to States bound by the express embargo under Article 170(3) of the Constitution
>
> **SUPREME COURT**

Constitutional embargo

The judgment was based on a petition filed by Professor K. Purushottam Reddy, seeking a direction to the Centre to conduct a delimitation exercise in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to readjust the seats in the States' Assemblies. The petitioner had pointed to the exercise done in Jammu and Kashmir as a precedent. Justice Kant, who authored the verdict, explained that there was a specific constitutional embargo in Article 170 which mandated that the delimitation exercise in States is barred until after the completion of the first Census post 2026.

Jammu and Kashmir, on the other hand, being a Union Territory, is excluded from the freeze on delimitation under Article 170 of the Constitution. The delimitation exercise in the Union Territory had been undertaken on the basis of the 2011 Census.

Distinct domains

"The two States in question (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir operate in distinct constitutional domains. Any delimitation exercise carried out in one cannot serve as a benchmark or ground of comparison for the other. The delimitation undertaken for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir cannot be mechanically extended to States bound by the express embargo under Article 170(3) of the Constitution," the Supreme Court held.

Besides, the court held that allowing delimitation for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana through a judicial dictum would foster discontent among other States and breed inequality.

"Granting such a relief would prompt unabated challenges from other similarly situated regions. In particular, the four North-Eastern States – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland – which were expressly excluded from the scope of delimitation by way of a Central notification in 2021," Justice Kant emphasised.

The court said that any leeway allowed to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana before the 2026 Census would "destabilise the uniform electoral framework and blur the clear demarcation between constitutional prescription and political discretion".

Operation Sindoor continues, need to be alert at all times: CDS

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

General Anil Chauhan

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Friday said that Operation Sindoor remains in progress and highlighted the vital need for uninterrupted military readiness, stating, "There are no runners-up in war."

Gen. Chauhan was speaking on the evolving role of the military professionals and the growing relevance of a "scholar warrior" at a seminar jointly organised by the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS) under the aegis of the "No.4 Warfare and Aerospace Strategy Programme".

Scholar warriors

"There are no runners-up in war... will give example of Operation Sindoor, which still continues, our preparedness level has to be very high, it's 24x7, 365 days. We are living in that kind of environment. It's only scholar warriors that can ensure this readiness by thinking differently, connecting the dots across this complete kind of spectrum," he said.

"A scholar warrior is a military professional who combines intellectual depth, combines skills. This individual possesses both strong academic knowledge and practical military expertise, enabling them to analyse complex situations, standardise effectively and adapt to diverse challenges in a dynamic security environment," the CDS said.

He emphasised that it was essential for the military to learn about both *shastra* (warfare) and *shaastra* (knowledge). The warrior today needs to master all three levels of warfare – tactical, operational and strategic in all domains.

Airlines asked to prevent unauthorised transport of live animals into India

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

In a bid to prevent the unauthorised carriage of live animals into India, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued fresh guidelines to airlines operators, official sources said on Friday.

Amid multiple instances reported by airlines regarding the carriage of live animals into India by passengers without proper declaration or clearance, classified as unbeknownst imports, the DGCA asked the operators to devise strategies to detect and deter the violation of deportation conditions.

Going by rules laid down by the Animal Quarantine and Certification Services and Indian Customs, such animals were subject to immediate deportation to their country of origin, with appropriate intimation to concerned stakeholders an authorities in that country.

The DGCA has asked the airline operators to detect violation of deportation conditions while carrying live animals to India.

Sole responsibility

Though the carriage of animals/birds by air was governed by the Aeronautical Information Circular (AIC) of 1985, the DGCA's advisory intended to further guide and ensure compliance with the latest instructions/orders of the Indian Customs and other law-enforcing agencies and facilitate the safe and legally compliant deportation of animals by all aircraft operators/airlines operating in India. "The airline that transported the undeclared live animals shall be solely responsible for deportation in accordance with applicable laws. All costs associated with deportation, including animal handling, in-transit welfare, documentation, and repatriation logistics shall be borne by the airline," the advisory said.

As part of the preventive measures, the operators were advised to make sure that the employees deployed at check-in counters, boarding gates and in-flight operations were adequately trained and sensitised on customs and quarantine rules and regulations pertaining to transport of live animals. Passenger advisories and signage regarding restrictions on import of live animals should be displayed prominently, the sources said.

8 years after stand-off with China, Doklam to open for tourists

Rahul Karmakar
GANGTOK

Eight years after witnessing a stand-off between Indian and Chinese troops, Sikkim's Doklam is set to open for tourists.

Located 68 km east of the State capital, Gangtok, and at an altitude of 13,780 feet, Doklam is a plateau in the Chumbi Valley at the tri-junction of Bhutan, China, and India. It became a flashpoint in June 2017 when China attempted to build a road in territory claimed by Bhutan.

India intervened to safeguard its strategic interests and to support Bhutan, an ally. China halted construction activities at Doklam, also known as Donglang, after more than two months of a controlled stand-off.

"We are preparing to open Doklam for visitors in September, when the tourist season starts in Sikkim. It is one of three sites the Defence Ministry identified in Sikkim for battlefield tourism in India," C. Subhakar Rao, the State's Additional Chief Secretary handling the Tourism and Civil Aviation departments, told *The Hindu*.

The other two sites are Nathu La and Cho La, where a series of clashes between Indian and Chinese troops took place from September to October 1967. Sikkim, then an Indian protectorate, became the country's 22nd State in May 1975 following a referendum. "Nothing much needs to be done at Nathu La, which is already a tourist spot about 58 km from Gangtok. At the other two Bharat Rannbhoomi Darshan sites (Cho La and Doklam), we are constructing cafeterias, restrooms, wayside amenities, and parking spaces jointly with the Army," Mr. Rao said. Army officials said work on the battlefield tourism sites has continued despite harsh terrain and conditions.

'Consensual sex between adolescents aged 16 to 18 must not be treated as abuse'

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

***Amicus curiae* says that the age of consent was static at 16 for 80 years and there is no reason for the increase**

The Supreme Court-appointed *amicus curiae* and senior advocate Indira Jaising has argued that consensual sexual acts by teenagers aged between 16 and 18 in voluntary relationships cannot be classified as "abuse" or prosecuted as a crime.

The written submissions filed by Ms. Jaising in the top court is part of a petition filed by advocate Nipun Saxena dating back to 2012. Ms. Jaising's brief has challenged the designation of 18 as the age of consent under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO), to the extent that it works to criminalise "consensual sexual activity between children between the age of 16-18". "The only solution lies in declaring that sex between consenting adolescents between the age of 16, an almost universal age of sexual maturity, and 18 is not a form of 'abuse'," Ms. Jaising's submissions said.

She said the exemption for consensual sexual acts between individuals in this age group must be read into the POCSO Act and also Section 375 (rape) of the Indian Penal Code and its corresponding provision, Section 63, of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

She submitted that the word 'child' in Section 2(d) of POCSO should not include those aged between 16 and 18 who engage in consensual sexual activity. "Without reading down the statutory age of consent set at 18, it is prayed that the Supreme Court read into the impugned provisions a 'close-in-age exception', applicable when both parties to the sexual act are adolescents between the ages of 16 and 18 and the sexual act is consensual. Such an exception would preserve the protective intent of the statute while preventing its misuse against adolescent relationships that are not exploitative in nature," she said.

The case in question contains a challenge against the increase of age of consent from 16 years to 18 years through the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013. "The age of consent was static at 16 for 80 years. No rational reason has been indicated for the increase, nor is there any data to suggest that the age of consent required any increase. The BNS has also kept a legislative scheme similar to the one in the Criminal Law Amendment Act," Ms. Jaising submitted.

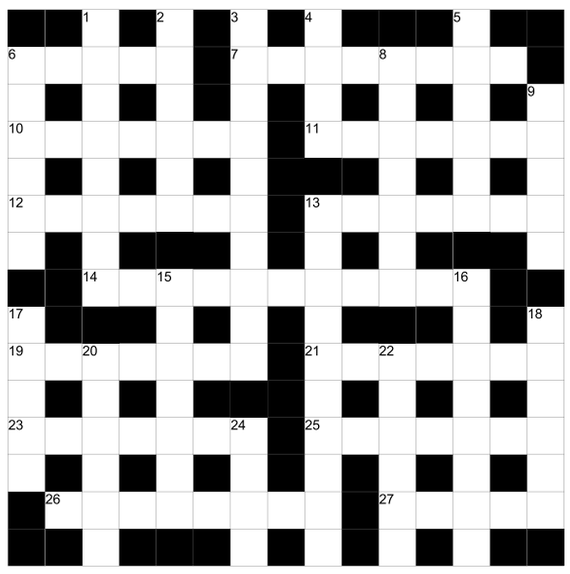
UPSC Together
Let's Crack UPSC

TH CROSSWORD + 14547

(set by Bruno)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

6 Luxurious, soft, and green (5)
7 End of toe and limb caught in vehicle, that can travel fast (8)
10 June, Bill, and Leah partly come to English party (7)
11 Bar's subdued - one left for party (7)
12 Magazine featured John playing game (7)
13 Desiring model with a rear-end that's rounded (7)
14 Storm observed here & perhaps tracked - wee high, basically (7,4)
19 Arrogant, oppressing, evil, bad boy (7)
21 America's universal friend.. at most times (7)
23 Invoice number missing time causing protest (7)
25 Note flying gull putting end of anchovy on victim (4,3)
26 Inconvenient accommodation for Eastern queen trapped in 9D (8)
27 Unknown, operated by Unit, when reversed gives a kind of operator (5)

Down

1 Part of play when mud's flung on boy, who's dancing (4,4)
2 Avoiding AA, sot finally in allopathy treatment? That's kinda flaky... (6)
3 Rest, perhaps - no good after that workout (10)
4 Hunk essentially lacking courage retreats (4)
5 California city's zoning lead outlaid every other stone (6)
6 Jean often wears parents' nightwear (6)
8 Part of boat tips in under nautical waterline during storm (7)
9 Mount horse on end of saddle (5)
13 Mark's merciful action in empty complex (10)
15 Artist at Virginia sent back by immigration authorities - that's wrong (7)
16 Lightweight metalworking building went bust - was abandoned (8)
17 Egg-shaped ring with topless skirt (5)
18 Limits of seismology, zoology, genealogy and heavenly alignment (6)
20 The French... very discontented about sex and humour (6)
22 Sign of mutual exchanges? (6)
24 Boss' part of the administration (4)

SUDOKU

5						9		
		4	2		3	8	6	
							2	5
						3	9	
3			4		8			1
	4	7						
7	6							
	9	2	5		1	4		
		5						8

No.SS6592 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

S	T	S			U	L	T	
SOURCE			HAMMERED					
M	A	N	I	B	S	N		
FETCHING			RESIST					
H	T	O	H	E	O	E		
TOMORROW			LONELY					
W	R		A	L		Y		
E	S	S	E	N	T	I	A	L
S			L	E			I	L
TEMPLE			RESIGNED					
C	O	V	M	T	H	A		
STANZA			ADAPTING					
I	I	T	R	I	E	I		
NOTEBOOK			RISING					
N	S	R		S	T	G		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	6	1	5	8	7	2	9	4
8	9	2	3	6	4	1	5	7
4	7	5	1	2	9	8	6	3
2	8	6	9	4	3	7	1	5
1	3	7	2	5	6	9	4	8
5	4	9	8	7	1	6	3	2
7	2	3	6	1	5	4	8	9
6	5	4	7	9	8	3	2	1
9	1	8	4	3	2	5	7	6

FAITH

Friend and devotee

Sri. Ranganji said in a discourse that the Vedas are the oldest literature. The greatness of the Vedas lies in the fact that they are fostered well and remain intact, unchanged, as they have been from time immemorial. The Vedas are the definitive testimony to understand dharma (Veda: *pramanam dharmasya*). The Vedas reside in the hearts of those who recite them by heart, like a God who dwells in the *garbhagriha* (sanctum sanctorum) of the temple. The *Ramayana* incorporates many doctrines from the Vedas and provides further insight into the concept of dharma.

The citizens of Ayodhya, who tried to stop their beloved leader, Rama, from heading to the forest, could not succeed and were left grief-stricken, torn, and wrapped in utter gloom. When Rama reached the river Ganga, the chief of the region, Guha, a hunter by profession, came running to greet Rama and extend a hearty welcome. It is but natural for people to see the face value of others and then befriend them. Rama, supreme in all aspects, did not see anything in making friends with Guha. Considering Guha as a coeval, Rama gave him the status of a king (*Ramasya Aatma Samassakha*). Like a cow secreting milk from its udder to its calf, Rama poured his blessings on Guha. Rama introduced his beloved spouse Sita to Guha as his best friend. Acharya Periavachan Pillai states in his commentary that Rama introduced Sita to Guha so that he would receive the blessings of the Goddess. Rama embraced Guha with a heart filled with joy.

Apostle Thirumangaiazhwar prayed to Lord Ranganatha, asking if he was like Guha and whether Lord Ranganatha would embrace him and extend his blessings.

INBRIEF

Russia-backed Indian refiner Nayara CEO quits on EU curbs

Russia-backed Indian refiner Nayara Energy has named a new chief executive after its previous CEO resigned following European Union (EU) sanctions that targeted the company, four sources with knowledge of the matter said on Friday. The reshuffle at the top is the latest disruption for the company since the EU announced a new round of sanctions last Friday directed at Russia over its war in Ukraine. REUTERS

BoB Q1 net inches up 2% to ₹4,541 cr., provisions double

Bank of Baroda (BoB), the second largest public sector bank, first quarter net profit rose 1.9% year-on-year to ₹4,541 crore. Net interest income fell 1.4% to ₹11,435 crore. Global net interest margin slid to 2.91% (3.18%). Total provisions (other than tax) and contingencies increased 94.6% to ₹1,967 crore from ₹1,011 crore. Gross NPA ratio improved to 2.28% from 2.88% while net NPA ratio also reduced by 9 bps to 0.60%.

Anuradha Thakur named director, RBI Central Board

The Union government has nominated Anuradha Thakur, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India as a Director on the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India in the place of Ajay Seth who has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). The nomination of Ms. Thakur is effective from July 24 until further orders.

Duty-free access to U.K. via trade pact to drive FDI into India

CETA includes separate chapter on 'Rules of Origin', which stipulate what kind of goods are eligible for the reduced tariffs the agreement provides

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The India-U.K. Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) has the potential to boost foreign direct investment (FDI) into India, officials, industry participants and investment analysts wagered.

A major driver of this is the local sourcing norm in the agreement that mandates only goods made in India would be eligible for the tariff reductions.

The CETA includes a separate chapter on 'Rules of Origin', which stipulates what kind of goods are eligible for the reduced tariffs the agreement provides.

"To qualify for reduced tariffs, the rules of origin specify a product must either be wholly obtained or significantly transformed through processing in either the U.K. or India," as per documents accompanying CETA.

This was to ensure that only genuinely British or Indian goods could access the preferential tariffs under the agreement.

"This is an important aspect of the deal, since it means goods imported from abroad, repackaged, and then exported to the U.K. will not be eligible for the zero duties," said a senior government official who did not wish to be named.

Unlocking potential: Union Minister Piyush Goyal and U.K. Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds signing CETA. ANI

"This means companies looking to export to the U.K. will have to invest in proper manufacturing here, instead of importing from countries like China."

He added, while the U.K. had opened up 99% of its tariff lines, India did not export all of these tariff lines to the U.K.

Zero duty export

"However, what the deal does is provide potential," the official explained. "If a foreign company sees an opportunity to export a particular good to the U.K., it will view India favourably since they can export from here at zero duty."

Sarvadnya Kulkarni, CEO, General Instruments Consortium, an engineering components maker, said this was especially true for the precision engineering sector.

"The U.K.-India FTA is expected to significantly enhance foreign direct investment in India's precision engineering and industrial instrumentation sector," Mr. Kulkarni told *The Hindu*.

"With reduced tariffs and greater regulatory alignment, U.K. engineering, procurement, and construction firms and original equipment manufacturers and process industry investors are likely to find India more attractive for sourcing, joint ventures and technology transfers."

India-U.K. pact avoids source code mandates

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

The digital trade chapter of the India-U.K. Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) commits both to avoid "the transfer of, or access to, source code of software owned by a person of other party," bringing significant policy relief to foreign technology firms, who have resisted such mandates. Source code is the base of all software applications, and is not typically visible to end users, as this may permit reverse engineering or cyber exploits.

The Software Freedom Law Centre, India (SFLC), a digital rights advocacy, said the chapter was "a welcome approach from both the countries" and reflected a "new posture of being pro-innovation and business over heavy handed regulation, especially on data localisation and transfers." The framework would still have to, SFLC warned, "reconcile" the data protection laws of India and the U.K.

The framework has to reconcile with data protection laws.

Open govt. data

Vikram Jeet Singh, partner, BTG Advaya, a transactional and disputes law firm, said a provision that permits both countries to access each other's 'open government data' is 'significant given the large amount of data available with the governments."

With the CETA, the two countries "have undertaken to ensure validity and enforceability of electronic contracts, promote the use of electronic authentication services, ensure online consumer protection, curb unsolicited commercial messages, and commit to open Internet access," Mr. Singh said.

In some ways, the CETA reflects India's existing posture on digital trade issues. For instance, the Department of Telecommunications is already in the midst of dropping a source code disclosure need for makers bidding for public procurement contracts, a concession that raised eyebrows among local players.

Another aspect is the lack of any commitment on data localisation, where India has not made any commitments on the "free flow of data," allowing regulators like the RBI to continue requiring strict data storage norms from firms in critical spaces like finance and banking.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	FRIDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	81,463	-0.88
US Dollar	86.52	-0.14
Gold	99,120	-0.50
Brent oil	68.78	-0.69

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2550.10	-58.30
Adani Ports	1396.30	-15.30
Apollo Hosp	7468.50	105.00
Asian Paints	2336.20	-15.90
Axis Bank	1086.10	-9.00
Bajaj Auto	8075.50	-213.00
Bajaj Finserv	1985.80	-46.50
Bajaj Finance	913.75	-45.20
Bharat Elec	395.20	-3.05
Bharti Airtel	1937.90	1.80
Cipla	1532.50	44.60
Coal India	380.80	-4.75
Dr Reddys Lab	1277.90	12.40
Eicher Motors	5433.00	-36.00
Eternal Ltd.	310.55	-2.60
Grasim Ind	2708.60	-27.30
HCL Tech	1490.10	-17.10
HDFC Bank	2004.60	-9.60
HDFC Life	762.35	5.05
Hero MotoCorp	4230.70	-71.20
Hindalco	693.45	-2.15
Hind Unilever	2415.40	-22.40
ICICI Bank	1477.10	-6.30
IndusInd Bank	823.70	-24.20
Infosys	1515.70	-36.80
ITC	409.40	-0.55
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	311.25	-5.20
JSW Steel	1026.90	-6.90
Kotak Bank	2124.60	-17.50
L&T	3442.90	-34.60
M&M	3246.40	-14.50
Maruti Suzuki	12404.00	-153.00
NestleIndia	2274.60	-47.50
NTPC	333.20	-5.70
ONGC	240.29	-4.54
PowerGrid Corp	292.10	-7.25
Reliance Ind	1391.70	-11.20
SBI Life	1832.10	38.50
State Bank	806.55	-9.15
Shriram Finance Ltd.	615.85	-17.70
Sun Pharma	1699.00	7.00
TataConsumerProduct	1054.40	-18.40
Tata Motors	687.40	-13.10
Tata Steel	161.43	-2.05
TCS	3135.80	-12.20
Tech Mahindra	1461.90	-36.70
Titan	3462.80	-21.60
Trent Ltd.	5043.00	-111.00
UltraTech Cement	12250.00	-54.00
Wipro	259.20	-2.65

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on July 25

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	86.31	86.63
Euro	101.26	101.64
British Pound	116.15	116.58
Japanese Yen (100)	58.39	58.61
Chinese Yuan	12.04	12.09
Swiss Franc	108.37	108.79
Singapore Dollar	67.37	67.63
Canadian Dollar	63.10	63.34
Malaysian Ringitt	20.43	20.53
Australian Dollar	56.63	56.85

Source:Indian Bank

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LTD.
O/o SE(TD-III), 604, LIC Jeevandeep Building, Lalkothi, Jaipur
E-TENDER NOTICE TN-31 (RVU2526GLOB00908)
E-Tenders are invited for procurement of CW Treatment Chemicals for various power plants of RVUN. Tender details are available on **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** (for e-tender), **www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvunl & www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in.**
Raj.Samwad/C/25/6881 RVUN/PR-4233 Superintending Engineer (TD-III)

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED
e-Procurement Tender Notice (Paper Notification)
TGSPDCL intends to float tender for procurement of a) 11KV 3x185 Sq.mm Heat Shrinkable Outdoor End Termination Kits b) 11KV HG Fuse sets with Polymer Insulators c) 63 KVA DTRs with BIS EE Level-2 (Star-2) d) 100 KVA DTRs with BIS EE Level-2 (Star-2) on e-procurement platform.
For further details of each item above, please visit **www.tgsouthernpower.org www.tender.telangana.gov.in**. Phone : 040-23431360, 1033, 1035, 1026
Sd/-
DIPR R.O.No.406-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2025-26 Dt:25.07.2025 CHIEF ENGINEER (P&MM)

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER, PHED, REGION AJMER
Telephone No. 0145-2628475 Fax No. 0145-2970247
e-mail:aceregionajmer@gmail.com date: 16/07/25
No. F.()/Ar.AJM/2025-2026/7792-7841
Corrigendum-I
(NIT No. 02/2025-2026)
In continuation to this office NIT No. 02/2025-2026, issued vide this office letter No. 6278-6307 dated 25.06.2025 for the work of **"PROVIDING, LAYING, JOINTING, TESTING, AND COMMISSIONING OF RISING PIPE LINE AND OHSR OF 250 KL AT MASUDA VILLAGE, PS-MASUDA, DISTRICT-BEAWAR under CM budget announcement 2025-2026 (NIT No.02/2025-26; Estimated Cost Rs.288.80 Lacs)."**, following amendments are hereby notified:

As per Published Information	Now amended as
Following bids are invited from interested bidders up to 16.07.2025 Other particulars of the Bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the state.	Following bids are invited from interested bidders up to 28.07.2025 Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the state.

All other terms, conditions and stipulation of the original NIT shall remain unchanged.
UBN No. PHE2526WSOB04084 **(Ram Chandra Rar)**
NIB No. PHE2526A1982 **Addl. Chief Engineer**
R.O No. DIPR/C/9010/2025 **PHED, Region, Ajmer**
DIPR/C/10204/2025

Office of the Mission Director, National Livelihood Mission Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Dept.,
 # 4, 2nd Floor, MYSUGAR Building, J.C. Road, Near Town Hall, Bengaluru-560002. email: nrlmkarnataka@gmail.com
EXTENSION OF DATE
1) **Sub:** Extension of Last Date for Submission of Expression of Interest (EoI) under DDU-GKY 2.0 program – Reg.
Ref: This office Letter No. KSRLPS/DDU-GKY 2.0/Regular/EoI/01/2025-26 dated 15.05.2025 and 03.06.2025
2) **Sub:** Extension of Last Date for Submission of Expression of Interest (EoI) under DDU-GKY 2.0 Captive Employment program – Reg.
Ref: This office Letter No. KSRLPS/DDU-GKY 2.0/ Captive/EoI/01/2025-26 dated 15.05.2025 and 03.06.2025
With reference to the subject cited above, the advertisement inviting Expression of Interest (EoI) published in this newspaper on 16.05.2025, it is hereby informed that, due to unavoidable circumstances, the last date for submission of online proposals through the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) designated portal **http://kaushal.rural.gov.in** has been **extended from 25.07.2025 to 30.08.2025.** All other terms and conditions specified in the original notification remain unchanged.
Sd/-
Mission Director
National Livelihood Mission
Karnataka
DIPR/CP/2029/AKAR/2025-26

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL TEACHERS TRAINING AND RESEARCH
Institution Deemed to be University under Distinct Category
A Centrally Funded Technical Institute, Ministry of Education, Government of India, Taramani, Chennai - 600 113.
Advt. No. 05/2025-26
Applications are invited for the following positions

Name of the Post	Reservation	No.of post	Pay Details
Assistant Professor of Education	UR	1 No.	Pay Level – 10, Rs. 57,700 - 98,200
Assistant Librarian*	OBC	1 No.	Academic Pay Level – 10, Rs. 57,700 - 98,200

For details, visit the Institute website: **https://www.nitttrc.ac.in**
*With reference to the Employment News/RozgarSamachar in issue 26 July - 01 August, 2025- vide EN No. 17/19, the name of the post of Sr. Librarian shall be read as **Assistant Librarian.** Director

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
CMG, SDSC - SHAR SRIHARIKOTA - 524124
Brief E- TENDER NOTICE:CORRIGENDUM-I
No: e-Tender Notice No.CMG/C/CON/258705 - (I) **Dt: 24.07.2025**
Refer to Tender No CMG/C/CON/258705 dated 30.06.2025 Name of work: **"Planning, Design, Construction, Commissioning and Operation of Full Dome Space Theatre at SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota, Tirupati District of Andhra Pradesh (Civil, Electrical, AC, Theatre Equipment and allied works in EPC Mode-1)"** (Est. cost Rs. 2772 Lakhs).
Sale period extended up to 08.08.2025
Interested tenderers may visit www.isro.gov.in or www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO for details.
Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG/SDSC SHAR

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
West Bengal Housing Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of West Bengal Undertaking)
HIDCO BHABAN, Premises No.35-1111, Biswa Bangla Sarani, 3rd Rotary, New Town, Kolkata-700156
Memo No. C–213(A)/HIDCO/Admn-4313 /2025 Date 23.07.2025
Abridged Notice for e-Auction
E-AUCTION FOR ALLOTMENT OF 166.50 KATHA (11137.50 Sq. Mtr) OF LAND AT PREMISES NO.34A, BELVEDERE ROAD UNDER WARD NO. 74 OF KMC IN ALIPORE, KOLKATA -27 ON FREEHOLD BASIS FOR COMMERCIAL USE. (2nd Call)
[e-Auction ID:2025_WB_4896] dtd. 23.07.2025

PLOT NO.	PLOT SIZE	E-AUCTION DATE	LAST DATE OF APPLICATION
PREMISES NO. 34A, BELVEDERE ROAD, ALIPORE, KOLKATA-27	166.50 KATHA	02.09.2025	25.08.2025 up to 14:00 hrs

For details, please visit https://eauction.gov.in or www.wbhidcoltd.com
Contact no :- 2324-6032/6037/6038
ICA- T15738(4)/2025

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग वृत राजसमन्द
क्रमांक :1651 दिनांक : 15.07.2025
निविदा संशोधन सूचना–3
(निविदा सूचना संख्या 02/2025–26)
इस कार्यालय द्वारा जारी निविदा सूचना संख्या – 02/2025–26 दिनांक 20.05.2025 एवं निविदा संशोधन–2 में वर्णित क्र.सं. 1 से 9 तक के कार्यों में निम्नानुसार संशोधन किया जाता है:–

क्र. सं.	विवरण	पूर्व में वर्णित दिनांक	संशोधित दिनांक
1	ऑनलाईन निविदा आवेदन डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तारीख (क्र.सं. 1 से 9 तक के कार्य)	22.05.2025 प्रातः 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 15.07.2025 को सांय 6.00 बजे तक	22.05.2025 प्रातः 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 12.08.2025 को सांय 6.00 बजे तक
2	Bid Security को Egras Challan रूप में जमा कराने की स्थिति में। (क्र.सं. 1 से 9 तक के कार्य)	22.05.2025 प्रातः 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 15.07.2025 को सांय 6.00 बजे तक	22.05.2025 प्रातः 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 12.08.2025 को सांय 6.00 बजे तक
3	ऑनलाईन निविदा खोलने की दिनांक। (क्र.सं. 1 से 9 तक के कार्य)	दिनांक 16.07.2025 प्रातः 11.00 बजे	दिनांक 13.08.2025 प्रातः 11.00 बजे

निविदा में वर्णित अन्य सभी शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी।
UBN :- PWD2526WSOB02039, PWD2526WSOB02040, PWD2526WSOB02041, PWD2526WSOB02044, PWD2526WSOB02045, PWD2526WSOB02046, PWD2526WSOB02048, PWD2526WSOB02049, PWD2526WSOB02051
DIPR/C/10202/2025 अधीक्षण अभियंता सा.नि.वि. वृत राजसमन्द

HON'BLE SUPREME COURT MONITORED HOUSING PROJECTS
Through Ld. Court Receiver
Executed by
NBCC (India) Limited
एन बी सी सी NBCC A Navratna CPSE
ASPIRE
Bulk Sale of inventory through e-Auction
Last Date of Submission of EMD 05.08.2025
Crafted for a lifetime of memories
at
EMD Fee: ₹67.67 Crore
ASPIRE LEISURE VALLEY
Package-1
Phase - II, Greater Noida (W), Uttar Pradesh
Specious 3BHK, 4BHK apartments with modern amenities
Close proximity to renowned schools and hospitals
Anand Vihar ISBT & railway station : 35 mins
e-Auction will be held on : 06.08.2025
Please scan this QR for e-auction document
For more details Please visit our website:
www.nbccindia.in I www.receiveramrapali.in
9772907414
Please scan the QR for location

Let's Crack UPSC Together

MANILA

Philippine Supreme Court blocks Sara Duterte impeachment trial

AFP

The Philippine Supreme Court ruled on Friday that the impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte violated the Constitution on a technicality, blocking her upcoming trial for criminal allegations, including her threat to have the President assassinated, and halting proceedings against her in the Senate. AP

ISTANBUL

Iran meets European powers amid threats of UN snapback sanctions

REUTERS

Iranian diplomats met counterparts from Germany, Britain and France on Friday for renewed nuclear talks, amid warnings that the three European powers could trigger "snapback" sanctions outlined under the 2015 deal. The meeting in Istanbul was the first since Israel's mid-June attack on Iran. AFP

JOS

Gunmen kill 14 in north-central Nigeria market vehicle 'ambush'

REUTERS

Unidentified gunmen on Thursday ambushed vehicles returning from Bokkos market in Nigeria's Plateau state, killing 14 people, including women and children. Two more died in retaliatory ethnic violence. The region faces recurring land disputes, 'bandit' attacks, and rising food prices driven by climate challenges. AFP

LANNEMEZAN

Lebanese militant released from French prison after 40 years

AFP

Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, 74, one of France's longest-held inmates, was released and deported to Lebanon on Friday after over 40 years in prison for his involvement in the 1982 murders of two diplomats. Greeted by dozens of supporters in Beirut, he was freed under conditions barring return to France. AFP

France will recognise Palestine as a state in September, says Macron

French President says he intends to make a formal announcement at the UN General Assembly; Palestinian Authority welcomes the decision, saying it reflects France's commitment to international law; Israel's Netanyahu slams the move

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Thursday his country would formally recognise a Palestinian state during a UN meeting in September, the most powerful European nation to announce such a move.

At least 142 countries now recognise or plan to recognise Palestinian statehood, according to an AFP tally – though Israel and the U.S. strongly oppose the move.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio called it a "reckless decision (that) only serves Hamas propaganda".

A Palestinian mother cradles her malnourished 18-month-old son at the Al-Shati refugee camp, west of Gaza City. AFP

Mr. Macron's announcement drew immediate anger from Israel, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying it "rewards terror" and poses an existential threat to Israel.

Senior Palestinian Authority official Hussein al-Sheikh welcomed the move, saying it "reflects France's commitment to international law and its support for the Palestinian people's rights to self-determination and the establishment of our independent state".

Mr. Macron said the "urgent priority today is to end the war in Gaza and rescue the civilian population".

"We must finally build the State of Palestine, ensure its viability and enable it, by accepting its demilitarisation and fully recognising Israel, to contribute to the security of all in the Middle East," he wrote on social media.

Mr. Macron said he intended to make the announcement at the UN General Assembly in September.

While France would be the most significant European power to recognise a Palestinian state, others have hinted they could do the same.

Norway, Spain, Ireland and Slovenia all announced recognition following the outbreak of the Gaza conflict, along with several other non-European countries.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, whose country already recognises Palestinian statehood, welcomed Mr. Macron's announcement.

"Together, we must protect what Netanyahu is trying to destroy. The two-state solution is the only solution," the Socialist leader said.

European nations urge immediate aid for Gaza

Agence France-Presse
BERLIN

Britain, France and Germany on Friday urged an end to Gaza's "humanitarian catastrophe" as the UN food agency warned almost a third of people in Palestinian territory were not eating for days.

In a joint statement, the leaders of the three European powers urged Israel "to immediately lift restrictions on the flow of aid and urgently allow the UN" and NGOs to "take action against starvation". "The most basic needs of the civilian population, including access to water and food, must be met without any delay," they said.

Israel has, however, rejected accusations it is responsible for the deepening crisis in Gaza.

People who fled their homes near the Cambodia-Thailand border taking rest in Oddar Meanchey province on Friday. AFP

Thailand warns of war with Cambodia as over 1.38 lakh flee

Agence France-Presse
SI SA KET

Thailand's acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai warned on Friday that cross-border clashes with Cambodia that have uprooted more than 1,30,000 people "could develop into war", as the countries traded deadly strikes for a second day.

A long-running border dispute erupted into intense fighting with jets, artillery, tanks and ground troops on Thursday, and the UN Security Council is set to hold an emergency meeting on the crisis later on Friday.

A steady thump of artillery strikes could be heard from the Cambodian side of the border on Friday, where the province of Oddar Meanchey reported one civilian had been killed and five more wounded.

Martial law

More than 1,38,000 people have been evacuated from Thailand's border regions, its Health Ministry said, reporting 15 fatalities with a further 46 wounded, including 15 troops.

On Friday evening, a Thailand military border commander declared martial law in eight districts on the frontier with Cambodia, citing "Cambodia's use of force to enter Thai territory".

"We have tried to compromise as we are neighbours, but we have now instructed the Thai military to act immediately in case of urgency," Mr. Phumtham said.

'Limited to clashes'

"If the situation escalates, it could develop into war – though for now, it remains limited to clashes," he told reporters in Bangkok.

By the afternoon, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nikorndej Balankura said there were signs the fighting was easing off, and said Thailand was open to talks, possibly aided by Malaysia.

Malaysia currently holds the chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) regional bloc, of which Thailand and Cambodia are both members.

However Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet claimed Thailand had already backed out of one proposed truce, saying in a statement he was awaiting Bangkok's "genuine willingness" to de-escalate.

Brazil ex-general tells court he drafted Lula assassination paper

Agence France-Presse
BRASÍLIA

A retired general told Brazil's Supreme Court he drafted a document planning for President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's assassination, as part of an alleged coup plot for which former President Jair Bolsonaro is also on trial.

General Mario Fernandes, a former acting chief of the General Secretariat of the presidency under Mr. Bolsonaro, confirmed in his testimony on Thursday that he drafted and printed the document, though he described it as a personal "thought" of his.

The far-right Bolsonaro is on trial for allegedly plotting a coup to cling to power after losing the 2022 election to leftist Lula da Silva.

The plot allegedly included a plan – dubbed "Green and Yellow Dagger"– to assassinate Mr. Lula, according to prosecutors. The alleged plan was to be carried out on December 15, 2022.

U.S. drops sanctions on Myanmar junta allies after letter of praise to Trump

Agence France-Presse
YANGON

The United States has lifted sanctions on several allies of Myanmar's ruling general and their military-linked firms, a U.S. Treasury notice shows, after the junta chief sent a glowing letter of praise to President Donald Trump. Junta chief Min Aung Hlaing seized power in a 2021 coup, deposing the civilian government and sparking a civil war which has killed thousands, leaving 3.5 million displaced and half the nation in poverty.

Two weeks ago, the top general sent a letter to Mr. Trump, responding to his threat of tariffs by lauding his presidency with praise, including for shutting down U.S.-funded media outlets covering the conflict.

A United States Treasury notice on Thursday said sanctions were dropped against KT Services and Logistics, the Myanmar Chemical and Machinery Company, and Suntac Technologies – as well as their managers.

KT Services and Logistics and its CEO Jonathan Myo Kyaw Thaung were described as junta "cronies" when they were sanctioned in 2022 for leasing Yangon's port from a military firm for $3 million a year.

Min Aung Hlaing

The Myanmar Chemical and Machinery Company and its owner, Aung Hlaing Oo, and Suntac Technologies owner Sit Taing Aung were sanctioned later that year for producing arms, including tanks and mortars.

A third Myanmar national, Tin Latt Min – who the U.S. previously described as owning "various companies that are closely related to the regime" – was also removed from the sanctions list.

The Treasury notice did not give a reason for their removal.

Let's Crack UPSC Together

Sport

Tanvi and Vennala storm into the semifinals

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
SOLO (INDONESIA)

Tanvi Sharma and Vennala Kalagotla continued their impressive run at the badminton Asia juniors individual championships, advancing to the semifinals here on Friday.

Second seed Tanvi defeated fifth seed Thalita Ramadhani Wiryawan of Indonesia 21-19, 21-14 in a swift 35-minute match.

Vennala braved a strong challenge from Thailand's Janyaporn Meepanthong in a gripping 58-minute contest. Vennala took the opening game 21-18 with some sharp rallies, but Janyaporn fought back to bag the second 21-17, forcing the match into a decider.

Tanvi Sharma and Vennala... good run. BAI

In the final game, Vennala pulled ahead in the closing stages eventually sealing 21-17 victory to earn her semifinal berth.

Both Indians now face Chinese opponents in the semifinals, with Tanvi set to take on eighth seed Yin Yi Qing and Vennala going up against Liu Si Ya.

The results: Girls (quarterfinals): Tanvi Sharma bt Thalita Ramadhani Wiryawan (Ina) 21-19, 21-14; Vennala Kalagotla bt Janyaporn Meepanthong (Tha) 21-18, 17-21, 21-17.

Unnati bows out after quarterfinal loss to Yamaguchi

Press Trust of India
CHANGZHOU (CHINA)

Unnati Hooda's dream run ended at the China Open Super 1000 as she lost to World No. 4 Akane Yamaguchi of Japan in straight games in the quarterfinals here on Friday.

The 17-year-old, who scripted her biggest career win against 'idol' and two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu, lost 16-21, 12-21 in a match that lasted 33 minutes.

Disappointing end

With Unnati's exit, India's singles campaign in the tournament came to an end. In the opening game, Unnati kept pace with Yamaguchi early on but failed to sustain the momentum, with the Japanese star reeling off five consecutive points at one stage to take it 21-16.

Unnati's best run was taking three points in a row.

Similar script

The second game followed a similar script. Despite winning four straight points, Unnati fell behind as Yamaguchi strung together six consecutive points and wrapped up the second game 21-12. Overall, Yamaguchi won 42 of the 70 points played across both games.

Time And Tide may score an encore

BENGALURU: Time And Tide, who is in rousing form as evidenced by his track movements, may score an encore in the Bangalore City Sprint Championship Gold Cup (1,200m), the feature event of the races to be held here on Saturday (July 26).

False rails (width about 3.5m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.

1 BRAVE DANCER PLATE (1,800m), rated 00 to 25, 2.00 p.m.: 1. Highland Dream (3) Abhishek Mhatre 62, 2. Sea Diamond (1) Vinod Shinde 60.5, 3. Royal Whisper (2) S. Sachin 59 and 4. Double Scotch (4) Antony 53.

1. DOUBLE SCOTCH, 2. SEA DIAMOND

2 RED DIVINE PLATE (1,100m), maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms), 2.30: 1. Efficacy (12) Shreyas S 56, 2. Jersey Garden (4) Antony 56, 3. Larson (1) Rayan 56, 4. Midnight Blue (8) A.A. Vikrant 56, 5. Sea Legacy (3) A.S. Peter 56, 6. Agrima (-) (-) 54.5, 7. Lysandra (5) Vinod Shinde 54.5, 8. My Honey (6) L.A. Rozario 54.5, 9. Power Pilot (7) R. Pradeep 54.5, 10. Razzmatazz (11) Siddaraju P 54.5, 11. Sea Charm (2) B. Dharshan 54.5 and 12. White Secret (10) A. Ramu 54.5.

1. EFFICACY, 2. MY HONEY, 3. MIDNIGHT BLUE

3 HONEY DAY PLATE (1,400m), rated 20 to 45, 5-y-o & over, 3.00: 1. Disruptor (3) S. Sachin 62, 2. Springsteen (8) Pavan 61, 3. Super Kind (4) Abhishek Mhatre 60.5, 4. Elveden (2) Aleemuddin 59.5, 5. Able One (1) Salman Khan 56, 6. War Trail (9) Arman Khan 56, 7. Baltimore (5) Asirvatham 55, 8. Double Vision (7) G. Vivek 54.5 and 9. Gandolfini (6) Akshay K 54.5.

1. ELVEDEN, 2. GANDOLFINI, 3. DOUBLE VISION

4 LUMBINI STUD PLATE (1,200m), rated 40 to 65, 4-y-o & over, 3.30: 1. Macron (3) R. Pradeep 61.5, 2. Felisa (9) Pavan 57, 3. Straordinario (2) Hindu S 57, 4. Corinthian (5) Akshay K 56.5, 5. Knotty Scotty (1) G. Vivek 56, 6. Storm Shadow (6) Dhanu S 55, 7. Run For The Sun (8) Antony 54.5, 8. Darrion (7) L.A. Rozario 54 and 9. Defence Counsel (4) Abhishek Mhatre 54.

1. CORINTHIAN, 2. KNOTTY SCOTTY, 3. RUN FOR THE SUN

5 LT. COL. GAUNT MEMORIAL TROPHY (1,200m), rated 40 to 65, 4.00: 1. Knotty Blush (6) Srinath 60.5, 2. Don Carlos (7) G. Vivek 60, 3. Perfect Legend (8) Abhishek Mhatre 59.5, 4. Knotty One (5) Asirvatham 58, 5. Sassy (4) Vinod Shinde 56.5, 6. Ebotse (3) Antony 54.5, 7. Gloriousness (9) Suraj 54, 8. Dufy (1) Shreyas S 53.5 and 9. Whirlwind (2) Hindu S 51.

1. PERFECT LEGEND, 2. GLORIOUSNESS, 3. WHIRLWIND

6 BANGALORE CITY SPRINT CHAMPIONSHIP GOLD CUP (1,200m), 3-y-o & over, (Terms), 4.30: 1. Aldgate (4) Antony 60, 2. Crown Drive (5) Hindu S 60, 3. Imperial Blue (2) Arvind K 60, 4. Knotty Charmer (1) G. Vivek 60 and 5. Time And Tide (3) Sandesh 60.

1. TIME AND TIDE, 2. CROWN DRIVE

7 XISCA PLATE (1,500m), rated 20 to 45, 5.00: 1. Hyperdrive (6) Pavan 60, 2. Kiss Of Grey (2) Suraj 60, 3. Sunlit Path (4) Srinath 57.5, 4. Imperial Star (8) M. Prabhakaran 57, 5. Thrill Of Brazil (5) Antony 56.5, 6. Breeze Bluster (1) Koshi K 55.5, 7. Anchorage (7) S. Sachin 53.5, 8. Assurances (3) Siddaraju P 53.5 and 9. Sling Shot (9) Vinod Shinde 51.

1. KISS OF GREY, 2. THRILL OF BRAZIL, 3. HYPERDRIVE

Day's best: **TIME AND TIDE**

Double: **EFFICACY - KISS OF GREY**

Jkt: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; Tr (i): 2, 3 and 4; (ii): 5, 6 and 7.

LIVE TELECAST

England vs India: 4th Test, day 4, Sony Sports Ten 1 & JioHotstar, 3.30 p.m.

Formula One: Belgian GP, Sprint Race, F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 3.30 p.m.; Qualifying, 7.30 p.m.

Football: Durand Cup, Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 3.30 p.m.

T20I tri-series (final): New Zealand vs South Africa, FanCode, 4.30 p.m.

West Indies vs Australia: 5th T20I, FanCode, 4.30 a.m. (Sunday)

GETTY IMAGES

The Red Bull-Verstappen-Mercedes plot thickens with Horner sacking

The four-time world champion has kept his team afloat, but Red Bull runs the risk of losing its prized asset ahead of the radical rules shake-up in 2026. With Mercedes and Toto Wolff eyeing the 27-year-old Dutch driver, Formula One is set for a very interesting summer

S. Dipak Ragav

If there is one truism that has stood the test of time, it is that empires always fall. Some crumble quickly, while others wither away slowly, even as the rulers fail to realise the erosion of power and influence. This applies to history, big businesses and sporting outfits.

Sport, in particular, has seen many rises and falls, given the relatively short playing careers of professional athletes and how that impacts team fortunes.

Past glory

The West Indies did not lose a Test cricket series from April 1980 to April 1995. It has since continued to plummet to new lows. Manchester United hasn't won the Premier League since legendary manager Alex Ferguson retired after guiding the club to its 20th top-flight title in 2013. Last season, the Red Devils finished 15th in the standings, their lowest in five decades.

In the world of Formula One, Ferrari hasn't won a title since 2008, a period following the departure of its famous axis of Ross Brawn, Michael Schumacher and Jean Todt, which had powered the Scuderia to stupendous success from 1999 to 2004.

However, unlike most other sports, where bringing in a few exceptional players can quickly transform a team's fortunes, turning the ship around is more complex in motorsport. It takes years to establish the team structure required to compete for wins and titles. So, when a successful outfit starts to fall apart, it can go off the rails spectacularly.

Earlier this month, Red Bull, which has won four drivers' and two constructors' titles over the last four seasons, hit the news for the wrong reasons when team boss Christian Horner was sacked. Horner has been at the helm of the energy drink giant's main F1 team since it entered the sport in 2005. In the cut-throat world of competition, his 20-year stint is one of the longest tenures at the helm for someone who is not an owner.

Horner was instrumental in the team's success, luring design genius Adrian Newey away from McLaren in the first year. Newey went on to lay the foundations for the squad's tremendous run of triumphs from 2010 to 2013 and from 2021 to 2024.

In all, Red Bull has won eight drivers' and six constructors' titles, and its 124 race wins make it the fourth-most successful team in the sport's 76-year history. Horner's exit comes on the back of other high-profile Red Bull departures over the last year, including that of Newey, who joined Aston Martin, and sporting director Jonathan Wheatley, currently team principal at Sauber.

Horner has been in the eye of the storm since February last year, when he was accused of sexual harassment by a female employee. He was cleared of the claims by an internal investigation, but his position has been tenuous. Red Bull's drastic drop in form since the middle of last year also weakened his hand. There are reasons to believe that his underplaying of Newey's influence forced the legendary designer to leave.

Wolff missed the chance to sign a teenaged Verstappen in 2015, when Red Bull offered him a seat in Toro Rosso. Smarting from that snub, Wolff has always hoped to one day get his man

Newey also indicated that the engineering team did not heed his warnings about the capricious nature of the car as early as 2023, when Red Bull won 21 of 22 races. Only Verstappen has been able to live with the car's handling. The reigning champion is almost heroically keeping Red Bull afloat, having scored 165 of the team's 172 points. He is third in the drivers' standings, 69 behind leader Oscar Piastri.

Not sustainable

The fact that Verstappen has managed two wins and consistently fights for the podium, even occasionally securing pole, demonstrates his exceptional ability behind a problematic car. However, the 27-year-old has made clear his frustrations of having to wring its neck to extract miraculous results every weekend.

As it often happens, whenever there is trouble in the kingdom, it attracts enemies who sense an opportunity to strike gold. Since last year, Mercedes and its part-owner team boss Toto Wolff have made no secret of courting the four-time champion.

Wolff missed the chance to sign a teenaged Verstappen in 2015, as Red Bull offered the Dutchman a seat immediately in its sister team Toro Rosso, something Mercedes couldn't guarantee. Smarting from that snub, Wolff has always hoped to one day get his man.

Another factor that was in play until recently was the simmering tension between the Verstappen camp and Horner. Max's father Jos attacked the now-sacked team boss publicly last year after the harassment allegations, saying the team was in danger of being torn apart as long as Horner remained in the hot seat. Seen in this light, could Red Bull's sacking of Horner have been a means of placating the Verstappen camp into staying, given the significance of next season?

In 2026, F1 will transition to new sustainable power units. Red Bull is taking a step into the unknown by building its own powertrains. Traditionally, engines are built by OEMs and not independent racing teams, which prefer to focus on the chassis and partner with a major auto manufacturer for engine supply.

But when Red Bull's current partner Honda pulled out in 2021, Horner pushed for Red Bull to become an engine manufacturer. Despite hiring heavily from rival teams, there are now murmurs that Red Bull's engine is behind Mercedes in terms of competitiveness.

The annual summer break (after the Hungarian GP on August 3 this season) is around the time when most driver contracts are renewed, and even though Verstappen has a deal until 2028, there are always get-out clauses.

Mercedes has a potential opening next year, with George Russell's contract ending at the end of 2025. The Briton has revealed his situation is dependent on Verstappen.

In any other scenario, Russell, who proved faster than Lewis Hamilton in their years as teammates and is performing at a high level this season, would have been a shoo-in for an automatic renewal. The fact that it has not happened shows how seriously Wolff believes he has a chance to land the big fish.

Before Verstappen's reign, Mercedes ruled F1 from 2014 to 2021, winning eight constructors' titles on the bounce in one of the longest periods of dominance in any sport worldwide. The foundation for that success was laid in 2014, when the current hybrid power units emerged, and Mercedes gained a significant lead over its rivals.

Interestingly, in preparation for the new era, Wolff and Niki Lauda, then a director at Mercedes, convinced Hamilton to leave McLaren at the end of 2012.

Doing a Hamilton?

It proved a masterstroke, with Hamilton securing six more world titles. If there is truth in the rumour of Mercedes nailing the new engines, Verstappen could be tempted to do what Hamilton did and jump from a ship that has a lot of holes.

While any move is fraught with risk, Mercedes has a track record of producing fast, reliable engines, and could offer Verstappen a shot at shattering even more records.

If he does jump ship, it could deal a fatal blow to Red Bull and send the F1 silly season into overdrive during the summer break.

Let's Crack It Together

STACKING UP

ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Jannik Sinner	23	12,030	16
2	Carlos Alcaraz	22	8,600	20
3	Alexander Zverev	28	6,030	23
4	Taylor Fritz	27	5,035	21
5	Jack Draper	23	4,650	17
6	Novak Djokovic	38	4,130	19
7	Lorenzo Musetti	23	3,350	20
8	Ben Shelton	22	3,330	24
9	Holger Rune	22	3,250	22
10	Andrey Rublev	27	3,160	29
11	Frances Tiafoe	27	2,940	25
12	Casper Ruud	26	2,905	23
13	Alex de Minaur	26	2,885	22
14	Daniil Medvedev	29	2,630	21
15	Tommy Paul	28	2,620	20

Top Indians ▶

Sumit Nagal
Rank 306 ▼ 19 spots

Karan Singh
Rank 403 ▲ 31 spots

WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Aryna Sabalenka	27	12,420	19
2	Coco Gauff	21	7,669	19
3	Iga Swiatek	24	6,813	16
4	Jessica Pegula	31	6,423	21
5	Mirra Andreeva	18	5,163	19
6	Qinwen Zheng	22	4,553	18
7	Amanda Anisimova	23	4,470	22
8	Madison Keys	30	4,374	19
9	Jasmine Paolini	29	3,576	19
10	Paula Badosa	27	3,454	22
11	Emma Navarro	24	3,420	25
12	Elena Rybakina	26	2,806	20
13	Elina Svitolina	30	2,794	16
14	Karolina Muchova	28	2,718	16
15	Ekaterina Alexandrova	30	2,666	25

Top Indians ▶

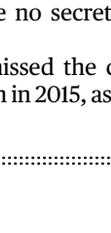
Shrivalli Bhamidipaty
Rank 320 ▲▼ No change

Sahaja Yamalapalli
Rank 352 ▼ 19 spots

F1 Drivers' standings

#	Driver	Team	Points	Wins
1	Oscar Piastri	McLaren	234	5
2	Lando Norris	McLaren	226	4
3	Max Verstappen	Red Bull	165	2
4	George Russell	Mercedes	147	1
5	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	119	0
6	Lewis Hamilton	Ferrari	103	0
7	Kimi Antonelli	Mercedes	63	0
8	Alexander Albon	Williams	46	0
9	Nico Hulkenberg	Sauber	37	0
10	Esteban Ocon	Haas	23	0
11	Isack Hadjar	Racing Bulls	21	0
12	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin	20	0
13	Pierre Gasly	Alpine	19	0
14	Fernando Alonso	Aston Martin	16	0
15	Carlos Sainz	Williams	13	0
16	Liam Lawson	Racing Bulls	12	0
17	Yuki Tsunoda	Red Bull	10	0
18	Oliver Bearman	Haas	6	0
19	Gabriel Bortoleto	Sauber	4	0
20	Franco Colapinto	Alpine	0	0

Oscar Piastri



Lando Norris

F1 Constructors' standings

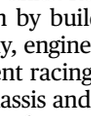
Pos	Team	Points	Wins
1	McLaren	460	9
2	Ferrari	222	0
3	Mercedes	210	1
4	Red Bull	172	2
5	Williams	59	0
6	Kick Sauber	41	0
7	RB	36	0
8	Aston Martin	36	0
9	Haas	29	0
10	Alpine	19	0

Badminton Men's ranking

#	Player	Points	Events
1	Kunlavut Vitidsarn	97,179	19
2	Shi Yu Qi	94,817	13
3	Anders Antonsen	92,253	17
4	Jonatan Christie	80,614	17
5	Li Shi Feng	79,678	19
6	Chou Tien Chen	74,669	24
7	Kodai Naraoka	71,554	20
8	Viktor Axelsen	69,440	10
9	Alex Lanier	67,821	14
10	Loh Kean Yew	66,719	18
11	Weng Hong Yang	62,620	17
12	Lu Guang Zu	61,860	18
13	Kenta Nishimoto	59,992	23
14	Christo Popov	59,137	18
15	Lee Cheuk Yiu	57,192	20

Top Indians ▶

Lakshya Sen
Rank 19



Ayush Shetty
Rank 31

Badminton Women's ranking

#	Player	Points	Events
1	An Se Young	1,15,120	12
2	Wang Zhi Yi	1,06,862	17
3	Han Yue	85,550	17
4	Akane Yamaguchi	83,064	14
5	Chen Yu Fei	79,935	11
6	Tomoka Miyazaki	71,964	22
7	Pornpawee Chochuwong	71,058	21
8	Gregoria Mariska Tunjung	70,060	14
9	Ratchanok Intanon	64,144	20
10	Putri Kusuma Wardani	63,600	18
11	Supanida Katethong	62,207	14
12	Gao Fang Jie	62,130	13
13	Yeo Jia Min	61,583	17
14	Sim Yu Jin	56,759	15
15	P.V. Sindhu	52,234	16

Top Indians ▶

P.V. Sindhu
Rank 15

Malvika Bansod
Rank 25

Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Joe Root	888	932
2	Kane Williamson	867	919
3	Harry Brook	862	898
4	Steve Smith	816	947
5	Yashasvi Jaiswal	801	858
6	Temba Bavuma	790	806
7	Kamindu Mendis	781	784
8	Rishabh Pant	779	801
9	Shubman Gill	765	807
10	Jamie Smith	752	753

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Jasprit Bumrah	901	908
2	Kagiso Rabada	851	902
3	Pat Cummins	838	914
4	Josh Hazlewood	815	864
5	Noman Ali	806	806
6	Scott Boland	784	784
7	Matt Henry	782	782
8	Nathan Lyon	769	812
9	Marco Jansen	767	803
10	Mitchell Starc	766	807

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Shubman Gill	784	847
2	Babar Azam	766	898
3	Rohit Sharma	756	882
4	Virat Kohli	736	909
5	Daryl Mitchell	720	751
6	Charith Asalanka	719	725
7	Harry Tector	708	767
8	Shreyas Iyer	704	710
9	Ibrahim Zadran	676	693
10	Kusal Mendis	669	802

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Maheesh Theekshana	671	686
2	Kuldeep Yadav	650	761
3	Keshav Maharaj	648	741
4	Bernard Scholtz	644	648
5	Rashid Khan	640	799
6	Mitchell Santner	637	657
7	Matt Henry	622	691
8	Wanindu Hasaranga	619	619
9	Ravindra Jadeja	616	733
10	Adam Zampa	614	699

T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Travis Head	847	885
2	Abhishek Sharma	829	829
3	Tilak Varma	804	845
4	Philip Salt	791	881
5	Jos Buttler	772	774
6	Suryakumar Yadav	739	912
7	Pathum Nissanka	736	722
8	Tim Seifert	716	708
9	Yashasvi Jaiswal	673	781
10	Shai Hope	670	670

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Jacob Duffy	733	723
2	Adil Rashid	710	747
3	Varun Chakravarthy	706	706
4	Akeal Hosein	694	714
5	Adam Zampa	693	746
6	Wanindu Hasaranga	679	809
7	Ravi Bishnoi	674	707
8	Rashid Khan	664	828
9	Mustafizur Rahman	653	718
9	Arshdeep Singh	653	679

Pragg summons his best, shows why Carlsen sees a lot of himself in the Indian

The 19-year-old GM has risen to World No. 4 — and India No. 1 — on the back of winning three important classical tournaments in the first half of the year. He is aiming to carry this form into the big events lined up for the rest of 2025 — particularly the World Cup at home

P.K. Ajith Kumar

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

> This is one of the best phases of my career. I have tried to change a few things, and they have gone my way. I am much more confident and I push myself more in critical games

In the latest World rankings released by FIDE, three of the top 10 are from India. The only other country that has more than one player in that list, published at the beginning of the month by the world chess governing body, is the United States, which has two.

R. Praggnanandhaa is ranked fourth, making him the highest ranked Indian; he is followed in fifth and sixth places by Arjun Erigaisi and D. Gukesh, respectively. It is the first time that the 19-year-old from Chennai is the India No. 1.

Not a big deal

Not that he considers it a big deal. "I am just [three points] ahead [of Arjun and Gukesh]," he stressed while talking to *The Hindu* recently over the phone from Zagreb, one of several international cities he has been crisscrossing through of late.

He, however, admits he is rather happy with the way he has been playing over the last few months. His current Elo rating also reflects that happiness. It is his career-best – 2779.

He truly seems to have pushed past the disappointments of 2024, which wasn't a great year for him, especially by the high standard he has set himself. Yes, he did play his part in India's stunning triumph at the Chess Olympiad in Budapest, but he wasn't as consistent last year as he would have liked.

This year, though, he has been playing quite superb chess, some of the best in his career. He has already won three important classical tournaments, including the prestigious Tata Steel at Wijk aan Zee in the Netherlands.

"It was a very important win for me because I was coming from not a great 2024," says Praggnanandhaa. "I had finished the previous year missing a medal at the World Rapid Championship; I was so close. I lost a game from a winning position in the penultimate round. So coming from that, starting the year with such a win certainly gives you confidence."

And Wijk aan Zee was one event he always wanted to win, from the time he was a kid. "It has so much history, of 87 years, and it was won in the past by several World champions," he says. "So winning that tournament was very special for me."

He followed it up by winning the Superbet Chess Classic in Romania and the UzChess Cup in Uzbekistan. "Tashkent was special because I wasn't thinking about winning it till the last couple of rounds," he reveals. "I was one and a half points behind the leader, and it didn't look like I had much of a chance, but things went my way. I managed to take my chances, against Arjun and Nodirbek Abdusattorov, two of the strongest players in the world right now. Then suddenly, I was in the tiebreakers, and I won."

In Romania, too, it was through the tiebreakers that he emerged as the champion, overcoming challenges from Alireza Firouzja and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave. And it was his maiden title on the Grand Chess Tour.

> Gukesh's World Championship victory over Ding Liren was exciting. Arjun crossing the 2800 mark in Elo rating was also inspiring. With our performances, we motivate each other

"Yes, this is one of the best phases of my career," says Praggnanandhaa. "I have tried to change a few things about my game, and they have gone my way. I am much more confident and I push myself more in those critical games."

Handling time pressure

He is also happy with the way he has handled the tiebreakers. "I needed to push myself in those games and I was able to do that," he says. "They are blitz games and they go down to these few seconds, which can go any way. I did need some luck in some of those games, but pushing myself certainly helped."

He is hoping to continue his form for the rest of the year, which has many major tournaments coming up, including the FIDE Grand Swiss, the Sinquefield Cup and the World Cup, which India will host.

"It is nice that the World Cup is being held in India," he says. "It will be an exciting event as there is a lot of interest in India in chess, and people can get to watch such a big tournament. And I am also excited to play the World Cup in India."

GETTY IMAGES

Praggnanandhaa is, of course, not going to be the only serious contender from India. He says being part of a group of strong Indian players definitely helps.

"I was following Gukesh's World Championship match in Singapore and his victory over Ding Liren was exciting," he says. "Arjun crossing the 2800 mark in Elo rating was also inspiring. With our performances, we all motivate each other. And it is nice to see other young Indian players are also doing well. Nihal Sarin is now playing more classical events, and he is winning tournaments too. And there is Aravindh Chithambaram, too."

Gukesh, Nihal, Arjun and Praggnanandhaa have benefited from significant support from corporates. "Sponsorship is very important," he says. "You have to travel a lot for tournaments, and training, too. And these things are not easy, and are expensive.

"For instance, when I prepared for the Candidates tournament, I needed to have a team and have training camps in person. All that requires financial support. I have been fortunate that Adani Group has been supporting me in a huge way. And they were there even when I was not having a good time last year. They were there supporting me throughout."

He is encouraged by the fact that more corporates in India are investing in chess. "And we need more strong events like the Chennai Grandmasters," he says. "I don't mind playing anywhere but playing in India is always special to me."

Praggnanandhaa is also happy to find chess becoming even more mainstream. He will feature in the Esports World Cup, where chess will make its debut on July 29. He has joined Team Liquid, which boasts World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen and No. 3 Fabiano Caruana.

The Magnus effect

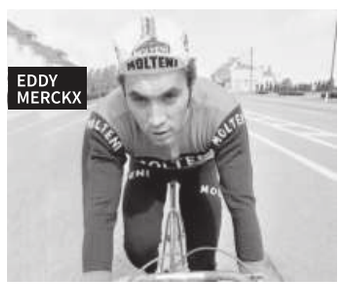
He says he is really glad to be part of that team. Carlsen, the five-time World champion from Norway, has often spoken highly of him, and the Indian has scored some memorable wins against the all-time great over the last few years.

Last week in Las Vegas, in fact, he beat Carlsen twice inside four days at the Freestyle Grand Slam. During the live stream of that event, Carlsen's wife Ella Victoria made an interesting remark while talking about Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa and Arjun. "Magnus did say that Pragg plays the most similar to him," she said.

High praise indeed.

Let's Crack UPSC Together

GAME THEORY



Masters of the Grand Tours

Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar, who won both the Giro d'Italia and the Tour de France last year, is looking for a fourth crown in France at this year's edition of the iconic race, which concludes on Sunday. The Vuelta a Espana is the only Grand Tour race he hasn't tasted victory at. We look at cycling's best multi-week stage racers — the men with the most Grand Tour titles:

Cyclist	Country	Winning span	Giro d'Italia	Tour de France	Vuelta a Espana	Total
Eddy Merckx	Belgium	1968–1974	5	5	1	11
Bernard Hinault	France	1978–1985	3	5	2	10
Jacques Anquetil	France	1957–1964	2	5	1	8
Fausto Coppi	Italy	1940–1953	5	2	0	7
Miguel Indurain	Spain	1991–1995	2	5	0	7
Alberto Contador	Spain	2007–2015	2	2	3	7
Chris Froome	Great Britain	2011–2018	1	4	2	7
Alfredo Binda	Italy	1925–1933	5	0	0	5
Gino Bartali	Italy	1936–1948	3	2	0	5
Felice Gimondi	Italy	1965–1976	3	1	1	5
Primoz Roglic	Slovenia	2019–2024	1	0	4	5
Tony Rominger	Switzerland	1992–1995	1	0	3	4
Roberto Heras	Spain	2000–2005	0	0	4	4
Vincenzo Nibali	Italy	2010–2016	2	1	1	4
Tadej Pogacar	Slovenia	2020–2024	1	3	0	4
Carlo Galetti	Italy	1910–1912	3	0	0	3
Philippe Thys	Belgium	1913–1920	0	3	0	3
Giovanni Brunero	Italy	1921–1926	3	0	0	3
Fiorenzo Magni	Italy	1948–1955	3	0	0	3
Louison Bobet	France	1953–1955	0	3	0	3
Charly Gaul	Luxembourg	1956–1959	2	1	0	3
Laurent Fignon	France	1983–1989	1	2	0	3
Pedro Delgado	Spain	1985–1989	0	1	2	3
Greg LeMond	United States	1986–1990	0	3	0	3

SOURCE: UCI, CYCLING HALL OF FAME

PICTURE THIS

GETTY IMAGES

Balancing act

What happens when aerospace engineering meets surf culture? A new sport forms.

Windsurfing emerged in the late 1960s as a result of this fusion. Jim Drake, an aeronautical engineer who spent his early years sailing, surfing and skiing, is credited with inventing the discipline, also known as sailboarding and boardsailing, in California.

Windsurfing's ancestry isn't straightforward, though. Englishman Peter Chilvers and American Newman Darby have claims of having pioneered the concept, too.

The sport, a combination of sailing and surfing, became an Olympic event in 1984 (men). A women's category was added in 1992. Olympic windsurfing utilises 'One Design' boards — all competitors use the same boards, daggerboards, fins and sails. The equipment is chosen to allow racing in a wide range of conditions because Olympic events must take place as scheduled whether or not the wind is strong enough for planing (skimming over the water).

The cutting-edge iQFOiL — the windsurfing class selected by World Sailing for Paris 2024 — will also feature at LA 2028.

MAKING IT A HABIT

Root scores a record 12th century against India in the longest format

GETTY IMAGES

Joe Root's century on the third day of the fourth Test at Old Trafford was his 12th against India, the most by any batter. It came in his 34th Test and 62nd innings against the opponent. He went past Steve Smith, who has 11 hundreds versus the Indians. Root also has 12 half-centuries against India.

NO PLACE TO HIDE

This has been a good learning experience for Kamboj: Morkel

AP

India's bowling coach Morne Morkel said that the team "lacked that little bit of energy on the ball" as the fast bowling unit struggled at Old Trafford. Debutant Anshul Kamboj has had an underwhelming outing. "This is international cricket, and there's no place to hide. But for him, it's been a good learning experience," Morkel said.

MARCHING AHEAD

Sreeja sails past Shao, enters the last four of WTT Contender Lagos

FILE PHOTO

Sreeja Akula registered back-to-back wins to reach the semifinals of the WTT Contender Lagos on Friday. The 26-year-old defeated Italian Debora Vivarelli 9-11, 11-9, 11-3, 11-1 in the pre-quarterfinal before easing past Portugal's Jieni Shao 11-7, 11-7, 11-7 in the next round. G. Sathiyan and Akash Pal reached the men's doubles final.

TIGHT FINISH

Arensman pips Vingegaard and Pogacar, wins stage 19

AFP

Dutch rider Thymen Arensman registered his second win in the Tour de France on Friday, taking stage 19 at the La Plagne ski resort two seconds ahead of Jonas Vingegaard and Tadej Pogacar. Barring a disaster, Pogacar should claim his fourth Tour de France title on Sunday as he exits the Alps with a lead of over four minutes.

Gunning for glory: Humpy will hope to bring all her experience into the summit clash against Divya. PTI

Now, it is Her Story for Indian chess

P.K. Ajith Kumar

History.

That is one word you may have come across often in write-ups or discussions on Indian chess for the last year or so.

There have been the incredible twin gold, for the men's and women's teams, at the Chess Olympiad in Budapest, D. Gukesh's World championship victory in Singapore...

And yet, history that was made in the Georgian city of Batumi on Thursday evening, at the women's World Cup, is really special. Because it is more of Her Story.

While India is the dominant force in men's chess – or rather, open chess – that isn't quite the case in the women's game. China is the undoubted superpower in women's chess.

All the last three World champions are from China; half the world's top 10 women are Chinese, and there is only one Indian.

Battle of generations

The World Cup final, starting on Saturday, however, is an all-Indian affair. Koneru Humpy, the World No. 5, takes on Divya Deshmukh, No. 18. They both overcame Chinese rivals in the semifinals, Lei Tingjie and Tan Zhongyi, respectively.

And it is a battle between generations, too. Humpy is 38. Divya is 19.

While the older woman has established herself as one of the world's greatest female players of all time in a career that has spanned over three decades, and she continues to overpower opponents who are much younger (she won the World rapid championship last December), the teenager is one of the game's rising stars.

They both showed exceptional skills and nerves of steel to move to the final of this demanding knockout tournament that featured most of the world's top players.

Their battle should provide some fascinating chess. Whichever way the final goes, towards Vijayawada or Nagpur, it should be a memorable one for the Indian sports fan.

It is not every day that the final of a major event has two Indians.

Big move: Giant-killer Divya will be aiming for another top scalp in the final. PTI

Classy Root continues love affair with Old Trafford as England gains control

The batting mainstay overtakes Ponting, becomes the second-highest run-scorer in Tests behind Tendulkar; a forgettable day for the Indian bowlers

INDIA IN ENGLAND

Shayan Acharya
MANCHESTER

Joe Root's love affair with Old Trafford continued as his milestone-laden century put England on top in what could possibly be the series-deciding Test.

Making the most of the bright sunshine and favourable conditions, Root (150, 248b, 14x4) brought up his 38th century and on the way became the second-highest run-scorer in Test history surpassing Rahul Dravid, Jacques Kallis and Ricky Ponting. Now, only Sachin Tendulkar is ahead of him in the list with 15,921 runs.

As records tumbled, a nonchalant Root focused on building crucial partnerships – first with Ollie Pope (144) and later with Ben Stokes (unbroken 142) – as England ended the day at 544 for seven, and pushed India on the back foot with a 186-run lead.

In his illustrious career, Root has had numerous memorable moments at the famous venue, where he remains the leading run-scorer for England in red-ball cricket, and as the Indian bowlers cut a sorry figure on Friday, the veteran marched on.

Shubman Gill underbowled Washington Sundar for the larger period of the first session, and eventually, when he was brought into the attack after lunch, the off-spinner picked up the wickets of Pope and Harry Brook to momentarily boost India's confidence. However, Root and Stokes put England back on top.

Letting the game drift

Conservative strategy and fitness concerns for Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj meant India let the game drift. Bumrah, who struggled after rolling his left ankle while climbing down the dressing room staircase, bowled only one over with the new ball post lunch before leaving the field. His absence meant that he wasn't allowed to bowl before tea, even though he returned to the field shortly.

With no Bumrah around and Siraj hobbling off the field for a while, India's fast bowling attack was in disarray as Shardul Thakur and Anshul Kamboj, who bowled under 130 kmph, erred in line and length as plenty of boundaries came along.

India's plan to use spinners Washington and Ravindra Jadeja in tandem, too, did not yield the results as England went past 400 with ease before Root brought up his hundred by glancing Kamboj for a four.

Missed chance

Root, however, got lucky earlier in the innings when Jadeja missed a run-out opportunity at the non-striker's end, and making the most of it, he went on to become the first batter to score 1000 Test runs at Old Trafford. Though India found some momentum with some quick wickets in the final session, England was firmly in control of the game by then. Stokes (77 batting, 134b, 6x4), after a hamstring pull, returned to action and ensured that there was no further loss.

Kamboj and Shardul were brought in to reduce the workload of Bumrah, but on a challenging surface, they bowled 29 overs together, whereas Bumrah alone bowled 28.

No back-up plan

With captain Gill failing to come up with a back-up plan, and his bowlers failing to seize the key moments, it was a day of despair for India.

At a venue, where it has never won a Test, India conceded a 500-plus total and has its back to the wall.

Rock-solid: Root broke a number of records much to the dismay of the Indians. GETTY IMAGES

SCOREBOARD

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS
358 in 114.1 overs

ENGLAND — 1ST INNINGS
Zak Crawley c Rahul b Jadeja 84 (*113b, 13x4, 1x6*), Ben Duckett c sub (Jurel) b Kamboj 94 (*100b, 13x4*), Ollie Pope c Rahul b Washington 71 (*128b, 7x4*), Joe Root st. Jurel b Jadeja 150 (*248b, 14x4*), Harry Brook st. Jurel b Washington 3 (*12b*), Ben Stokes (batting) 77 (*134b, 6x4*), Jamie Smith c Jurel b Bumrah 9 (*19b, 1x4*), Liam Dawson (batting) 21 (*52b, 2x4*), Chris Woakes b Siraj 4 (*17b*); Extras (b-4, lb-14, nb-13): 31; Total (for seven wkts. in 135 overs): 544.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-166 (Crawley, 31.6 overs), 2-197 (Duckett, 38.1), 3-341 (Pope, 76.1), 4-349 (Brook, 80.1), 5-499 (Root, 119.2), 6-515 (Smith, 124.1), 7-528 (Woakes, 129.1).

INDIA BOWLING
Bumrah 28-5-95-1, Kamboj 18-1-89-1, Siraj 26-4-113-1, Shardul 11-0-55-0, Jadeja 33-0-117-2, Washington 19-4-57-2.

Let's Crack UPSC Together

India call-up most significant step of my career: Jagadeesan

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

When N. Jagadeesan was preparing to leave for practice on Thursday in his hometown of Coimbatore, his focus would have been to get ready for the TNCA first division league next week. Little did he expect to be picked for the Indian team to be part of the fifth Test against England next week, replacing the injured Rishabh Pant.

"I was surprised when I got the call," said Jagadeesan. "It is the most significant step of my career and a dream come true. I have grown up thinking about this very moment. It is a great feeling not just for me but my parents and coach (A.G. Guruswamy) as well."

A key person behind the 29-year-old's resurgence in recent times has been former India player Robin Uthappa. "We have known each other since our CSK days. A couple of years ago, after not being picked in the IPL, I felt I needed a mentor, and we got in touch. He has given me a sense of security about how I feel as a cricketer."

Jagadeesan.
FILE PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

The TN vice-captain also felt that his promotion to the opening spot two years ago had helped him.

As he now awaits his visa before joining the team, Jagadeesan adds, "I just want to be in the present, enjoy this moment and not get over-excited".

Red Bull Racing set for tough times post Horner's exit, says Villeneuve

FORMULA ONE

S. Dipak Ragav

This weekend's Belgian Grand Prix will be the first time in 20 years Red Bull Racing will not be led by Christian Horner, who was sacked two weeks ago following the British Grand Prix.

As the team embarks on the post-Horner era, former F1 World Champion Jacques Villeneuve, said the team is set for some tough times ahead, having lost its team boss, who was instrumental in all its success.

"It was very sudden, unexpected, but it's been brewing in the background for quite a while. It is destabilising for the team because Christian ran the factory, so this will have an effect, and it will take a bit of time to rebalance everything," said Villeneuve.

"It's been a little bit difficult for the team. Adrian Newey (former technical boss) and some other key members left. But Christian brought the outfit to where it is now.

Powering ahead: Piastri took pole for the sprint race. AFP

"So this situation is very tough on him, and it's difficult from the outside to understand the reasoning behind the whole situation," he added.

Commenting on this year's championship, the 1997 drivers' champion believes Lando Norris, who is eight points behind championship leader and teammate Oscar Piastri, has built a bit of momentum with wins in the last two races.

"Lando seems to have recovered a bit. He seems to be more emotional than Piastri, but he has a slight edge in speed. So when you take the two into account, it's hard to know which one has the better shot at winning.

FanCode is the official broadcaster for F1 in India

"There's a big difference between being the team leader, the championship leader or being the underdog. Lando seems to be better when he's a little bit behind and has to fight back to come forward. So he is in a good position right now," said Villeneuve.

AP adds: Piastri beat Max Verstappen to pole position for the sprint race at the Belgian Grand Prix. The Australian was at risk of being eliminated after straying off track in the second part of the session but bounced back to take pole by .477 of a second from Verstappen, who split the two McLarens by relegating Norris to third, .618 off the pace.

"The car's been mega all day," Piastri said on Friday. "This is a track I love, it's my favourite one".

INBRIEF

Veteran India woman batter Veda Krishnamurthy retires

India batter Veda Krishnamurthy on Friday announced her retirement from international cricket but hinted that she will continue to be associated with the sport in some other role. Veda played 48 ODIs and 76 T20Is, collecting 829 and 875 runs respectively. "From a small-town girl with big dreams to wearing the India jersey with pride. Grateful for everything cricket gave me the lessons, the people, the memories. Time to say goodbye to playing, but not to the game. Always for India. Always for the team" she said in a social media post. The 32-year-old last played the T20I match against Australia at Melbourne in 2020. She made her international ODI debut in 2018.

Anahat loses to Nadien in the World junior squash semis

Anahat Singh of India, seeded two, lost to Nadien El Hamammy of Egypt (3/4) 11-6, 14-12, 12-10 in the semifinals of the WSF-World junior squash championships in Cairo on Friday. The 17-year-old was up 10-5 in the second game and 10-7 in the third, but the Egyptian came back strongly, and will meet the top-seeded Amina Orfi in the final. In another all-Egyptain last four clash, Amina defeated Sohalya Hazeem (5/8) 11-6, 11-5, 11-5.

TVS Motor Company extends deal with Angkor Tiger FC

TVS Motor Company has extended its partnership with the Cambodian Premier League team, Angkor Tiger Football Club, for the 2025-26 season. This year, TVS Motor will enhance its support to the club with the contribution of a TVS Kargo King 225cc auto. The club will use the vehicle for its operational purposes. Angkor Tiger FC is based in the city of Siem Reap and Indian firm SkaSports holds a stake in it.

Bikramjeet beats Jatin for singles title

Bikramjeet Singh Chawla beat Jatin Nain 6-3, 6-2 in the final of the ₹100,000 AITA men's tennis at the Harvest Academy in Jassowal.

Other results: Semifinals: Jatin bt Ricky Chaudhary 6-4, 6-2; Bikramjeet bt Aman Dahiya 6-4 (retired).

Doubles: Final: Omkar Shinde & Paramveer Singh bt Mayank Sharma & Jatin Nain 6-2, 6-0.

DPS secures place in Oriental Cup boys' final

Delhi Public School, RK Puram, became the first boys' team to secure a place in the final of the Oriental Cup football tournament with two clinical wins at the Dr. Ambedkar Stadium in New Delhi on Friday. It defeated Navy Children School 1-0 and then romped past New Greenfield School, Saket, 4-0. The Mother's International School also made a strong statement, notching up victories in both the boys' and girls' categories to remain firmly in the race for the final.

UP Warriorz appoints Nayar as head coach

Former India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar was on Friday named as the head coach of the Women's Premier League franchise UP Warriorz ahead of the fourth season of the competition. Nayar joins UPW after the franchise parted ways with Jon Lewis, who had been in charge of the team for the last three seasons.

Nagal and Yuki in Indian team for Davis Cup tie against Switzerland

Along with the former, Karan and Aryan are the designated singles players; Rajpal and Ashutosh to be the captain and coach respectively

TENNIS

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

The top-three players, Sumit Nagal, Karan Singh and Aryan Shah, have been selected to play the singles matches in the Davis Cup World Group-1 tie to be staged on indoor hard courts in Switzerland on September 12 and 13.

All the players were available for selection this time, and Yuki Bhambri and Sriram Balaji will feature in the doubles.

The selection committee of the All India Tennis Association, which met under the chairmanship of Nandan Bal, also announced three reserve players – Dhakshineswar Suresh, S. Mukund and Rithvik Bollipalli. Rohit Rajpal and Ashutosh Singh will be the captain and coach respectively.

India has a 2-1 win-loss record against Switzerland, and has beaten it both at home and away.

The two teams met the last time in 1993 on the grass courts of South Club in Kolkata, when Ramesh Krishnan and Leander Paes helped the team win the tie 3-2. The two won their singles matches against Jakob Hlasek, and won the doubles in five sets against Hlasek and Marc Rosset. The Barcelona Olympics gold medallist Rosset won both his singles matches then.

The current Switzerland team, which lost the first round of qualifier to Spain, is expected to be selected from Jerome Kym (145), Marc-Andrea Huesler (170), Dominic Stricker (205), Mika Brunold (300), Alexander Ritschard (314), Jakub Paul (350) and Remy Bertola (352).

Nagal has slipped to a rank of 306, while Karan and Aryan are ranked 403 and 442 respectively.

Yuki is the highest ranked Indian doubles player at 35, and Balaji is at 75, two places above Rithvik.

Huge responsibility: Nagal, who has slipped to a world ranking of 306, needs to raise his game in the away fixture. FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

Vaishnavi wins bronze medal in World University Games

Sports Bureau

Vaishnavi Adkar went down fighting 6-2, 4-6, 4-6 in a three-hour duel in the women's tennis semifinals to Eszter Meri of Slovakia in the World University Games in Rhine-Ruhr, Germany. It was a fine run by the 20-year-old Vaishnavi who had dropped only 19 games in all in winning the earlier four rounds in a draw of 64.

The effort fetched her a rare tennis medal in the Games.

In fact, it was the only individual medal so far for the Indian contingent.

Vaishnavi was close to winning another medal in the mixed doubles with Atharva Sharma but the duo got beaten in the quarterfinals by the Japanese pair of Natsuki Yoshimoto and Jay Friend.

Vaishnavi and Atharva had won two rounds earlier without dropping a set against teams from Colombia and USA.

Giving it her all: Vaishnavi went down to Slovakia's Meri in a hard-fought semifinal. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results: Women: Singles (semifinals): Eszter Meri (Svk) bt Vaishnavi Adkar 2-6, 6-4, 6-4; **Quarterfinals:** Vaishnavi bt Sina Herrmann (Ger) 6-1, 6-4; **Pre-quarterfinals:** Vaishnavi bt Angella Okutoyi (Ken) 6-3, 6-4; **Second round:** Vaishnavi bt Venla Elisa Ahti 6-2, 6-4; Li Zongyu (Chn) bt Anjali Rathi 6-1, 6-4; **First round:** Vaishnavi bt Jollen Geels (Ned) 6-1, 6-0; Anjali bt christina Owomuhangi (Uga) 6-0, 6-0.

Mixed doubles (quarterfinals): Natsuki Yoshimoto & Jay Friend (Jpn) bt Vaishnavi & Atharva Sharma 6-0, 7-5; **Pre-quarterfinals:** Vaishnavi & Atharva bt Olivia Center & Jerry Barton (USA) 6-2, 7-5; **First round:** Vaishnavi & Atharva bt Angie Castillo & Camilo Torres (Col) 6-1, 6-4.

Nagal sails into Tampere semifinals

Sports Bureau

Sumit Nagal sustained his fine run and beat qualifier Nicolas Kicker of Argentina 6-4, 6-3 in the quarterfinals of the €91,250 Challenger tennis tournament in Tampere, Finland, on Friday.

Other results: €181,250 Challenger, Zug, Switzerland: Doubles: Quarterfinals: Nam JiSung (Kor) & Takeru Yuzuki (Jpn) bt Siddhant Banthia & Alexander Donski (Bul) 6-4, 6-2.

$160,000 Challenger, Bloomfield Hills, USA: Doubles: Quarterfinals: Jason Jung (Tpe) & Reese Stalder (USA) bt Niki Poonacha & Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan 6-1, 6-2; Stefan Dostanic & Benjamin Kittay (USA) bt Anirudh Chandrasekar & Ramkumar Ramanathan 4-6, 6-4, [10-7].

$30,000 ITF men, Champaign, USA: Singles (pre-quarterfinals): Dhakshineswar Suresh bt Evan Bynoe (USA) 6-3, 7-5.

$15,000 ITF men, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand: Doubles (quarterfinals): Sai Karteek Reddy & Tomohiro Masabayashi (Jpn) bt Krittin Koaykul & Jirat Navasirisomboon (Tha) 6-3, 6-1.

€100,000 WTA, Palermo, Italy: Doubles (quarterfinals): Renata Jamrichova (Svk) & Tara Wuerth (Cro) bt Rutuja Bhosale & Peangtarn Plipuech (Tha) 7-5, 6-4.

$100,000 ITF women, Evansville, USA: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Fiona Crawley & Sara Daavettila (USA) bt Wakana Sonobe (Jpn) & Sahaja Yamalapalli 6-4, 6-4; Arianne Hartono (Ned) & Prarthana Thombare bt YeXin Ma (Chn) & Himeno Sakatsume (Jpn) 6-4, 6-0.

$30,000 ITF women, Monastir, Tunisia: Doubles (quarterfinals): Dayeon Back (Kor) & Vaidehee Chaudhari bt Kanon Sawashiro (Jpn) & Beatrise Zeltina (Lat) 6-1, 7-6(4).

$15,000 ITF women, Huamantla, Mexico: Doubles (quarterfinals): Kaitlyn Carnicella (USA) & Amanda Elkin (Mex) bt Gala Arangio (Arg) & Diva Bhatia 6-2, 6-2.

$15,000 ITF women, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand: Singles (quarterfinals): Yuno Kitahara (Jpn) bt Zeel Desai 4-6, 6-4, 6-2.

$15,000 ITF women, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain: Doubels (quarterfinals): Sravya Shivani & Emma Kamper (Den) bt Warona Mdlulwa & Wozuko Mdlulwa (RSA) 6-3, 6-4.

Compound archers do well

Sports Bureau

Parneet Kaur and Kushal Dalal made crucial contributions as Indian compound archers claimed three medals, including a gold, a silver and a bronze, in team events at the World University Games in Essen, Germany, on Friday.

Parneet and Kushal joined hands to rally from being a point down in the second end to defeat the Korean duo of Park Yerin and Seunghyun Park 157-154 (39-39, 38-39, 40-36, 40-40) in a closely fought mixed team event title clash and win the gold.

Kushal, Sahil Jadhav and Hritik Sharma had a bright start against Turkey, comprising Batuhan Akcaoglu, Yunus Arslan, Yakup Yildiz, in the men's team summit clash, but slipped in the final end to be beaten 232-231 (57-58, 57-59, 60-57, 58-57).

World championships women's team gold medallist Parneet, Madhura Dhamangaonkar and Avneet Kaur dispatched the United Kingdom, consisting of Hallie Boulton, Chloe A'Bear, Grace Chappell, 232-224 (59-51, 58-58, 56-56, 59-59) to take the bronze medal.

Parneet, Kushal and Sahil will compete for individual medals on Saturday.

Indian men's team to tour Australia for four-match series

HOCKEY

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

As part of its preparations for the upcoming Asia Cup, the Indian men's hockey team will tour Australia for a friendly four-match series in Perth from August 15 to 21.

The Asia Cup is due to be held in Rajgir, Bihar from August 29 to September 7. The continental showpiece offers a direct qualification spot for next year's FIH World Cup to the tournament winner.

"This tour comes at a crucial time for us, just ahead of the Hero Asia Cup in Bihar. While these are technically friendly matches, they form a very important part of our preparation phase," India chief coach Craig Fulton said in a statement issued by Hockey India.

"Playing against a team like Australia will test us in all aspects – both on the ball and off it – and that is exactly what we need to sharpen up before a major tournament," he added.

NSG Bill 2025 will safeguard women athletes

Anjum Moudgil

The introduction of the National Sports Governance Bill 2025 within days of the launch of Khelo Bharat Niti is definitely a memorable period for Indian sports. As an athlete, it fills me with immense pride that the bill's emphasis on gender equality and athlete safety in particular will define our country's sporting foundation going forward.

Respect, equality, and protection for all athletes, male or female, is an absolute necessity. I am happy that the National Sports Governance Bill's 'Safe Sport Policy' addresses an alarming need of harassment that females, especially minors, face. In strict adherence with the POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) Act, this policy highlights there is a very strong commitment from government to protect all athletes.

I've had a couple of experiences where my peers would send me messages asking what to do on certain situations. All I could do was refer them was to the athlete committee in shooting, where they could go and talk about it. There was nothing I could directly do beyond talking to them or, if I knew the person involved, maybe reaching out. So, a structured support is very important.

Anjum Moudgil. R.V. MOORTHY

The policy addresses the need of safeguarding athletes, be it minors or men and women, from harassment and abuse. Every player deserves to play free of fear. Abuse has no gender.

I feel a lot of things happen in different sports, especially at the grassroots level, and athletes, especially minors from rural district, don't find the right people to talk to. Having a proper committee with equal men and women representation in the team helps, who can listen to the issue without judgment, and eventually proper precautions and actions can be taken. There should be no negative impact on the victim accounting the story.

Removing that fear and giving athletes confidence is very important.

In this context, I am particularly impressed with another important provision of the National Sports Governance Bill 2025, which makes it mandatory to have at least four women in Executive Committees and governing bodies of sports federations. This development will definitely lead to India following global benchmarks of equal gender representation in sporting bodies, for example, like the IOC does.

It's not that men taking up executive committee roles don't understand, but there are certain things about women that the other gender cannot understand, simply because they've never experienced it.

As a woman, somewhere once or twice in our lives, we've all experienced things like being stared at or someone passing a comment. These are shared experiences. So, having women in top committees really matters. We will understand the matter better. That means better understanding, better listening, and better support. The committee can decide on the next steps, but at least there will be a free space for them to be heard properly.

Coaches, administrators, and all others in positions of authority will also be held accountable in the event of any such incident happening. For women athletes in particular, this is a moment of validation. It sends a message that the country values not just our achievements, but also our well-being, dignity, and future.

This will make the sport fairer, especially when we are organising so many grassroots level competitions through initiatives like the Khelo India ASMITA (Achieving Sports Milestone by Inspiring Women Through Action) leagues. I hope, you know, we also get to a point where it's equal representation – 50-50% – of both genders.

All in all, I feel the National Sports Governance Bill now needs to enforce how effectively grievance cells are set up, how accessible these complaint mechanisms are addressed for rural athletes, as well as how the National Sports Federations (NSFs) implement these reforms with seriousness.

On a concluding note, the growing development in Indian sports will get a significant push through the National Sports Governance Bill. With our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi stressing on Viksit Bharat 2047 and the importance of sports and fitness, we can affirm that the journey of an athlete is not just about glory, but also about struggle, safety, and self-respect. What happens off the field is just as important as what happens on it.

(The author is an Olympic shooter and a World Championship silver medallist).

Ish Sodhi.
FILE PHOTO K. MURALI KUMAR

Sodhi joins elite club

ANI
HARARE

New Zealand leg-spinner Ish Sodhi etched his name into the record books on Thursday as he became the third bowler in men's T20I history and the second among the Kiwis to pick up 150 wickets in the format.

Sodhi achieved the milestone during his brilliant spell against Zimbabwe in Harare, where he finished with match-winning figures of 4/12.

The leggie now joins Tim Southee and Rashid Khan in the elite club.

Let's Crack UPSC Together